



County of Riverside Onboarding Guidebook



RIVCO 1HR

learning & organizational development

This guidebook was developed for County of Riverside hiring managers and supervisors by the Human Resources Learning and Organizational Development Division. We know that hiring new employees takes time and effort. We want to make that responsibility a little easier for you. This guidebook is full of tips, information, and tools to assist you with making a lasting impact on your employees from preboarding through the first six months and beyond. Sections will also include information regarding onboarding in a virtual environment. While you may not read this guidebook in its entirety as it may not pertain to you at this moment, it is intended to serve as a resource at various points in the onboarding process.

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RIVCO ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE GUIDEBOOK

Use this guidebook to create an experience for County of Riverside employees that supports and drives employee retention, engagement, high performance, and long-term satisfaction. The onboarding experience needs to be carefully planned and optimized with the intention to provide the employee with information and tools to help them succeed.

In this guidebook you will find sample templates for reference. The appendix houses links to these templates for your use, and additional resources as well. The sample templates and appendix are meant to support your efforts in making the onboarding experience easy and efficient.



WHY ONBOARDING IS SO IMPORTANT

Onboarding is a critical point in the talent lifecycle. The initial onboarding experience significantly influences job performance, long-term satisfaction, and employee retention.



22 % of turnover occurs within the first 45 days

A solid program not only bridges the gap between candidate experience and employee experience, it acts as a catalyst for employee satisfaction and retention. Employees that go through a structured onboarding program are 69% more likely to stay for 3 or more years.¹ And not only will they stay, but they will also be more productive.

Ultimately, your onboarding experience is your employees' initial introduction to the Organization -- if you don't implement a memorable and helpful onboarding process that fully integrates new employees into your organization, you risk higher turnover rates and less productive teams.



Organizations with a standard onboarding process experience 50% greater new-hire productivity.

Of course, it's hard to make a powerful first impression with limited resources and budget. To help you succeed, we've created this onboarding guidebook full of essential resources for every stage of your new hire process.

"The faster new hires feel welcome and prepared for their jobs, the faster they will be able to successfully contribute to the firm's mission." said Talya Bauer, Ph.D., author of *Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success*.



"You never get a second chance to make a first impression."

¹ BambooHR, What People Really Want from Onboarding

A SUCCESSFUL RIVCO ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE

Onboarding takes time and it is tempting to want to rush the process in hopes of getting your new hire active in their day-to-day tasks as soon as possible. However, longer, structured onboarding experiences are proven to help new hires gain proficiency 34% faster² than those who go through shorter programs.

The first day in a new job is exciting. However, that excitement can be replaced with anxiety if the employee is bombarded with mounds of paperwork and a list of onboarding tasks that don't allow them to make connections to their organization, team, and new role. If you haven't implemented a successful onboarding experience, your organization will likely have an increase in early exit rates. Organizations that implement engaging onboarding programs retain 91% of their workers through the first year³. And many experts anticipate even higher numbers with the current candidate-controlled market.

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), there are four C's to successful onboarding.

- **Compliance** – The most basic aspect of an employee's job. Compliance includes essential company rules, policies, and legal procedures. Dress code, clock-in procedures, and government policies (for instance, HIPAA requirements in the medical field) fall under this category.
- **Clarification** – Even the most qualified and experienced new hires need a specific breakdown of their job requirements. The Clarification process lets employees know exactly what is expected of them. You should also include in this process a summary of your company's structure, providing information on who oversees what and to whom your new hire will be reporting.
- **Culture** – Give your new hires a sense of what your organizational culture is like. What are the official norms of the workplace? What are the unspoken norms? How is work ethic valued? What kind of leadership can your new hires expect from their supervisors? And if you're making a change to your organizational culture, the new hires onboarding experience is a great place to start the introduction to your organization's culture.
- **Connection** – Networking is key to getting ahead in life. Your new hires know this, and they need to be able to network with leadership, peers, and other employees for information and cooperation. But more than that, your new hires need to be able to connect with others, forming relationships and giving human meaning to showing up at work every day.

This helpful onboarding guidebook will provide you with information and tools which address these four key areas required for a successful onboarding experience. Let's get started!!

² Alorica, Think Quick: Increase Speed to Proficiency

³ SHRM, Original Onboarding Options from 4 HR Leaders

PHASES OF ONBOARDING

A new employee's first days, and even their first weeks, are critical to how they will work with the County long term. Onboarding, in contrast to orientation, expands over a period usually estimated at 6 to 12 months. A good onboarding program will create positive experiences at each stage to help new employees understand how to do their job while forging meaningful connections with their coworkers, their boss, and the organization they've just joined.⁴ It is the duty of the organization to design a process that helps the new employee to be effective as well as productive.

PHASES OF ONBOARDING



⁴ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/five-stages-employee-onboarding-jeff-toister-cplp-phr>

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ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

Utilize the checklist below as a quick reference in assisting you with each stage of a new hire’s onboarding experience!

Preparing for the First Day

- Access the [Onboarding Checklist](#)
- Send new hire [Welcome Email](#) or [Virtual Welcome Email](#)
- Familiarize yourself with the County’s NeoGov Onboarding Portal in the event your new hire has questions

First Day

- Access the [“Hiring Manager: Tasks to do on a New Hire’s First Day” checklist](#)
- Create an agenda for your new hire’s first day
- If virtual, schedule a first day virtual team greeting

First Week

- Ensure your new hires are building relationships
- Access the [Week One Checklist](#)
- Access the [New Employee Orientation Flyer](#), in the event your new hire needs it or has questions regarding their session
- Assign an Onboarding Mentor

First Month

- Ensure your employee completes, or is signed up for, all relevant trainings and mandated training courses
- Schedule check-ins regularly
- Provide timely, constructive feedback on an ongoing basis

First Quarter

- Access the [First Quarter Check In Questions](#)
- Meet for 3-month performance check-in
- Provide information on ongoing learning opportunities and resources available
- Check in with the employee and their assigned onboarding mentor to see how things are progressing

First Year

- Conduct your employee’s 1-year performance evaluation
- Solicit feedback on improving the onboarding process

**Additional
Onboarding
Resources:**

[One-on-One Meeting
Guide](#)

[One-on-One Notes Page](#)

[Pre-One-on-One
Questions](#)

[SMART Goals Worksheet](#)

COMMON ONBOARDING MISTAKES

PROCRASTINATION AND DISORGANIZATION

NOT HAVING A CLEAN AND READY WORKSTATION

UNCLEAR GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

EXAGGERATING OR UNDERSTATING A JOB'S SCOPE

NO FORMAL SCHEDULE OR PROCESS

OVERFLOW OF INFORMATION AT ONCE

IGNORING CULTURAL ADAPTATION

LACK OF GUIDANCE FROM MANAGERS AND MENTORS

CONFUSING ONBOARDING WITH ORIENTATION

NEGLECTING TO COLLECT FEEDBACK

PREPARING FOR THE FIRST DAY

One of the most important and often overlooked steps is pre-boarding. It's the introduction to the full onboarding experience. Not only does it increase new hires' excitement, but it also fosters a relationship with them before orientation.

So, before your new employee steps foot into your organization, do your homework with the following checklist. From the basics to awesome extras, this list will help you identify every way to make them feel valued and welcome.

Also, don't hesitate to talk to them early on in their first days. We created a sample email for you to customize and send to your new hires one week before they arrive. It's a great way to communicate how excited you are for them to join and prepare them for success on day one. Don't forget to add your culture and personality!

PREPARING FOR THE FIRST DAY IN A VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

The need for telecommuting and virtual onboarding has grown in 2020 and may be a continuing reality going forward. As a result, departments are tasked with tackling the unique set of challenges that these telecommuting employees face, including virtual onboarding. Hiring and onboarding new employees completely virtually is a new concept for most employers. This section is here to help you transition to virtual onboarding seamlessly. Below are resources to help you make your new employee feel welcomed their first day in their new virtual position.

INTRODUCTORY PHONE CALL

An introductory call with a new employee to welcome them and explain the onboarding process and timeline. Let them know you are accessible throughout the process. Provide clear and concise instructions. Regular follow-up on their progress is helpful.

SET UP TECHNOLOGY

Making sure your new hires have the right technology is very important right now. Your department can create a series of videos presenting step-by-step instructions for getting computers set up. Automating your processes will help some, but ensure your department is still able to offer personalized service if employees are having problems.

It's important to ask new hires what tools they need to be successful in their roles. Placing the information in the welcome e-mail ensures the information isn't lost and can be one of the first tasks that they complete.

ENSURE UNDERSTANDING OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

It is important that new employees understand how to share information, access documents, and keep information safe between them and their coworkers. Employees also need to understand who to go to with questions, and how to best contact those individuals, while working remotely.

Here is a list of communication tools to consider:

- Phone (cell phone, office phone, audio-conferencing, etc.)
- Mail (email client, web browser, phone, tablet, etc.)
- Group messaging tools (Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, etc.)
- Video conferencing software (Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, Go-To Meeting, Zoom etc.)
- File-Sharing (Box, Dropbox, etc.)

SAMPLE PRE-BOARDING CHECKLIST

PRE-BOARDING

- Send welcome email (template in guidebook)
- Send out email to department/team about new hire's background, experience, and start date
- Prepare new hire's workspace
 - Clean work area
 - Order/install telephone
 - Confirm new hire's telephone extension is working
 - Order supplies, business cards, name plate
- Alert IT of new hire's start date to arrange the following:
 - Computer access
 - Email set-up
 - Phone & voicemail set-up
- Schedule meetings to meet the department leads, team members, and other parties they will be working closely with.
- Select an Onboarding Mentor to include employee during their transition phase
- Prepare department welcome packet for first day with helpful resources
- Add new hire to team meeting and other critical reoccurring meeting invites.
- Add employee to organizational/team chart
- Set calendar reminder for birthday and work anniversary



SAMPLE NEW HIRE WELCOME EMAIL

Dear (FirstName),

Welcome to the County of Riverside! We are so excited that you chose to join our team. Below you will find information on what to expect your first day and some additional helpful information.

DAY ONE ARRIVAL

(Weekday, Month, Date)

(Time)

(Address)

(Google map link for directions)

(Parking Information)

Ask for (Name)

(Phone number)

DRESS CODE

Sample: (Department Name)'s dress code is business casual – jeans and button-down shirts are fine with us!

OTHER IMPOTANT INFORMATION

Where to park, if they get a 30 minute or 1-hour lunch, etc.

WHAT TO EXPECT ON YOUR FIRST DAY

X:00 am – X:00 am	Welcome - Paperwork/New Hire Forms
X:00 am – X:00 am	Introductions & Tour
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Lunch
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Equipment & Resources
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	New Role Overview with Manager
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Meet your Onboarding Mentor
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Next Steps

WHAT TO BRING

- A valid driver's license or passport to verify your identification and eligibility to work.
- Add additional information based on your unique position and department.

GET TO KNOW US

(Link to Department Website)

(Link to Department Organizational Chart)

(Link to County Website)

(Link to HR Website)

(PowerPoint presentation PDF of their new team members – this would ideally contain a slide for each team member that they create themselves. Encourage each team member to add their personality to their slide and provides both professional and personal information. They can also include their MBTI type, Strengths from the Strengths Finder, or any other helpful information that would assist their new team member in getting to know them).

AROUND YOUR WORKSITE

Gas Stations

- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.
- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.
- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.

Restaurants and Fast Food

- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.
- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.

Dry Cleaner

- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.

Grocery and Drug Stores

- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.
- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.

Car Wash

- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.

Banks

- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.
- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.
- Add additional information here based on your unique position and department.

We are so excited to have you start soon – welcome to (Department Name)!

(Your Name)

(SignatureInfo)

VIRTUAL NEW HIRE WELCOME E-MAIL SAMPLE

Dear (FirstName),

Welcome to the County of Riverside! We are so excited that you chose to join our team. Below you will find information on what to expect your first day and some additional helpful information.

DAY ONE

(Weekday, Month, Date)

(Time)

(Phone number)

DRESS CODE (for when they are required to come into office)

Sample: (Department Name)'s dress code is Business Casual

MENTOR INFORMATION

(Name)

(Phone Number)

(E-mail Address)



SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

X:00 am – X:00 am	Welcome - Paperwork/New Hire Forms
X:00 am – X:00 am	Introductions & Tour
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Lunch
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Equipment & Resources
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	New Role Overview with Manager
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Meet your Onboarding Mentor
X:00 pm – X:00 pm	Next Steps

GET TO KNOW US

(Link to Department Website)

(Link to Department Organizational Chart)

(Link to County Website)

(Link to HR Website)

(PowerPoint presentation PDF of their new team members – this would ideally contain a slide for each team member that they create themselves. Encourage each team member to add their personality to their slide and provides both professional and personal information. They can also include their MBTI type, Strengths from the Strengths Finder, or any other helpful information that would assist their new team member in getting to know them).

(Attach team directory, so they have phone numbers and e-mail for everyone on their team)

We are so excited to have you start soon – welcome to (Department Name)!

(Your Name)

(Signature Info)



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE'S NEOGOV ONBOARDING PORTAL

County of Riverside's NEOGOV Onboarding Portal is a one stop shop for your new hire's needs. On this page they can view their new hire checklist, important documents, view welcome messages, and get tips on how to have a successful first day whether in the office or virtually. It is filled with useful information to guide them through their onboarding process.

Welcome to the County of Riverside family, **Victoria Gonzales!** We are happy to welcome you as part of the team, and are excited for you to embark upon your new career with us.

The County of Riverside is the 4th most populous County in the State of California and the 10th most populous in the nation. We are comprised of over 40 dynamic departments, spanning from Eastvale to Blythe, and have over 22,000 employees.

Riverside County strives to attract and develop the best personnel while recognizing the importance of a quality work-life balance. We offer a variety of work schedules, stellar benefits, ample leave time, and employee programs designed to enhance employee well-being and foster a 'Great Place to Work' for a high-performance workforce.

Please utilize this site to learn a little bit more about your new employer, and to complete some important tasks prior to your start date.

Welcome aboard!

How To Use This Site

The most important component of this site is your new employee **checklist** (located in the top right hand side of this screen). The

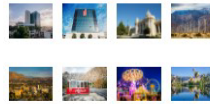
checklist contains several important forms and tasks for you to complete as a new employee. Please ensure you complete everything on your checklist as soon as possible.

Tips for a Successful First Day

1. Find out what the dress code is and wear the appropriate attire.
2. Arrive early.
3. Review onboarding and orientation materials carefully.
4. Listen & ask questions.
5. Be Confident when introducing yourself to your new team.
6. Clarify expectations with your boss.
7. Be available to your supervisor.
8. Say goodbye when you leave.
9. Send thank-you emails to those that helped you throughout the day.

In the Spotlight

Riverside County is known for its historical landmarks, but check out these breathtaking views! Our County has so much to offer.



Tips for a Successful First Virtual Day

1. Set up your work space.
2. Review onboarding material from your new employer.
3. Get your communication tools in order.
4. Keep a consistent schedule.
5. Figure out your ideal working environment.
6. Get to know your team.
7. Clarify expectations with your boss.
8. Give yourself a break.
9. Remember to thank everyone who helps you.

DAY ONE EXPERIENCE

The goal for day one is to make your new employee not only feel welcomed but also engaged with your department's culture. A positive welcoming experience puts your new employee at ease and reinforces that joining your team was a great choice. Below are different guides and resources to help you and your new hire have a successful first day.



First Day Agenda Sample

Make a checklist for your new hires. This will cover the **Compliance** and **Clarification** aspects of the Four C's. Some good questions to put on this checklist are:

- Who is my supervisor and who are my team members?
- What tools and software are required? How does my team communicate?
- What accounts need to be set up (email, servers, etc.)?
- What is the important contact information I will need?
- What are some smaller projects I can work on (small wins)?
- What is my first assignment and what are the expectations for it?
- Is there any required reading for my position?

Building confidence and great first impressions should be the takeaway from day one. You want your new hires to be excited about coming back to work the next day.

HIRING MANAGER: TASKS TO DO ON A NEW HIRE'S FIRST DAY

- Introduce your new hire to your team members in-person and to the company via email and/or company messaging software.
- Worksite tour including break rooms, restrooms, meeting rooms, emergency exits, copy/business center, supply room, etc.
- Provide a welcome packet
- Make sure your new hire's computer station is up and running. Check whether the IT team has:
 - Set up new hire's accounts (e.g. email)
 - Installed software and applications, including anti-virus systems
 - Shared necessary manuals
- Run a role-specific training. Train new hires on:
 - Their main responsibilities

- The team structure (names, roles, duties and organizational chart)
- Job-specific tools
- The team's objectives
- Schedule meetings for your new hire with team leaders they will collaborate with.
- Assign first tasks to your new hire. Make sure to:
 - Offer guidance, as needed
 - Provide resources that your new hire is likely to use (e.g. reports, spreadsheets, and glossaries)
 - Clarify questions that may arise
- Assign your new hire a work buddy to help them adjust to their new workplace.
- Invite your new hire to a group lunch to help them get to know other employees.
- Give your new hire an overview of the first week and the first month on the job.
- Make sure to set aside time for new hires to ask any questions they might have.
- Ensure new hire is enrolled in County New Employee Orientation (NEO). Email HRL0D@RIVCO.ORG with any questions.
- Confirm that the new hire has all needed resources in their workspace.



FIRST DAY VIRTUAL TEAM GREETING

Arrange for a video call and have the entire team there to greet your new employee. Go around the virtual room and let them introduce themselves, explain their roles and how each one can help. Have the new hire schedule individual meetings that week with their new team members. This will not only get them familiar with the team but will also make them feel included even working from home. You can also gamify these individual meetings by giving your new employee a list of things to find via a "scavenger hunt" format! Here is a great link to set up your own scavenger hunt: <https://teambuilding.com/blog/virtual-scavenger-hunt>

One easy way to insert social time into an onboarding plan is to start every meeting with a check-in or icebreaker. This could involve asking each participant to share their best work-from-home hack or a place they would love to travel.

Team welcome cards signed by everyone (ideally, handwritten but electronic signatures can work too).

Putting together team Introduction PowerPoint that you send out to welcome new employee. Have one of their first tasks be to make their own slide to send out to the team and be added to PowerPoint to be sent out the next time a new employee is hired.



WEEK ONE INVOLVEMENT

During the first week, ensure your new hires are building relationships. The way they are perceived by their peers is important to confidence and job performance. In addition, if they feel like they're making valuable connections, chances are they'll stick around longer. Internally, keep them informed on how the company is organized and how the sociology of the workplace flows.

Meeting and starting to work with organizational 'insiders' are an important aspect of learning about any organization. In addition, new employees need to feel socially comfortable and accepted by their peers and superiors. Research has long found acceptance by peers to be an indicator of adjustment.

HOW TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE

1. Understand your strengths and weaknesses
2. Schedule time to develop relationships
3. Ask questions and listen
4. Offer assistance
5. Know when to ask for assistance
6. Appreciate each employee's role
7. Keep your commitments
8. Be present

FIRST WEEK OUTCOMES

COMPLIANCE

- Employees are familiar with internal procedures and processes and performance expectations.
- Assign tasks or projects to the employees
- Explain goal setting process and review process
- Ensure employees have access to all drives, information and technology required to perform the role.

CLARIFICATION

- Touch base with employees frequently. Conduct a debrief after initial meetings, training and commencement of work.

CULTURE

- Employees feel settled into the work environment.

CONNECTION

- Arrange for personal welcome with department leads, team members, and other parties they will be working closely with.
- Arrange for lunch meetings/coffee catch-ups with randomly selected people from various divisions/internal departments.

WEEK ONE CHECKLIST

- Check in often with the new employee- don't wait for them to come to you.
- Include the new employee in key meetings where they can begin to gain an understanding of the department.
- Schedule the employee to meet with key people in the department.
- Introduce the new employee to other team members.
- Enroll the employee in the Countywide New Employee Orientation within the first 30-days of their employment.
- Be available for any questions the employee might have.
- Pair the new employee with an onboarding buddy/mentor within their team who can assist throughout the first few months.



VIRTUAL CHECK-INS

Try to schedule one-on-one meetings weekly for the first few weeks to gauge how the employee is doing with their virtual onboarding. These calls will keep you apprised of any problems your new hire may be facing, and how they are settling into their new position. During these calls, get a feel for what they need to succeed in their new role, whether that's support, resources, or additional work – and create a schedule to meet virtually every day, once a week, twice a week, or more. Each employee will have different needs and being attentive to these needs will help them transition successfully.

MANAGE THE PACE OF ONBOARDING FOR VIRTUAL EMPLOYEE

Onboarding will likely be different for many new employees and will [often be conducted remotely](#). Onboarding should always be paced; this is even more important with remote workers to avoid overwhelming them. Try pacing out virtual training and exercises and give new hires some free time during the day to absorb the information and ask questions.

Allow them to drive their onboarding. The easiest way to do this is by creating a “getting started” checklist for them to work off. What tools do they need to download by the end of the first week? When do documents need to be signed? Who do they need to schedule meetings with? By creating tasks, they can do on their own, you not only give them control of their onboarding but also free up your time.

Fill downtime with self-study items. Create a list of “self-study” items (documents, essential articles, websites, competitors' information) to fill those breaks in the schedule. This will also help to break up the monotony of constantly being on calls.

SET SPECIFIC GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR NEW VIRTUAL HIRES

New employees who are working remotely should not wait until their manager is online to learn what their next tasks are for the day or work week. Some recommendations for hiring managers include:

- Creating and sharing a task calendar for their new employee.
- Outlining short and long-term goals.
- Scheduling regular one-on-one meetings to discuss upcoming projects and resolve potential concerns.

PLAN FOR AN IN PERSON MEETING THE FIRST MONTH FOR VIRTUAL NEW HIRES

Many virtual companies swear by the practice of investing in meeting their new employees in person the first week or month. The manager can have the new team member come into the home office to meet the company executives. Doing so provides a chance to hear stories about the company culture, vision, and values. Furthermore, it speaks volumes to the new team members about how important they are to the team. If time and expense is a deterrent, have a face-to-face meeting using videoconferencing technology.

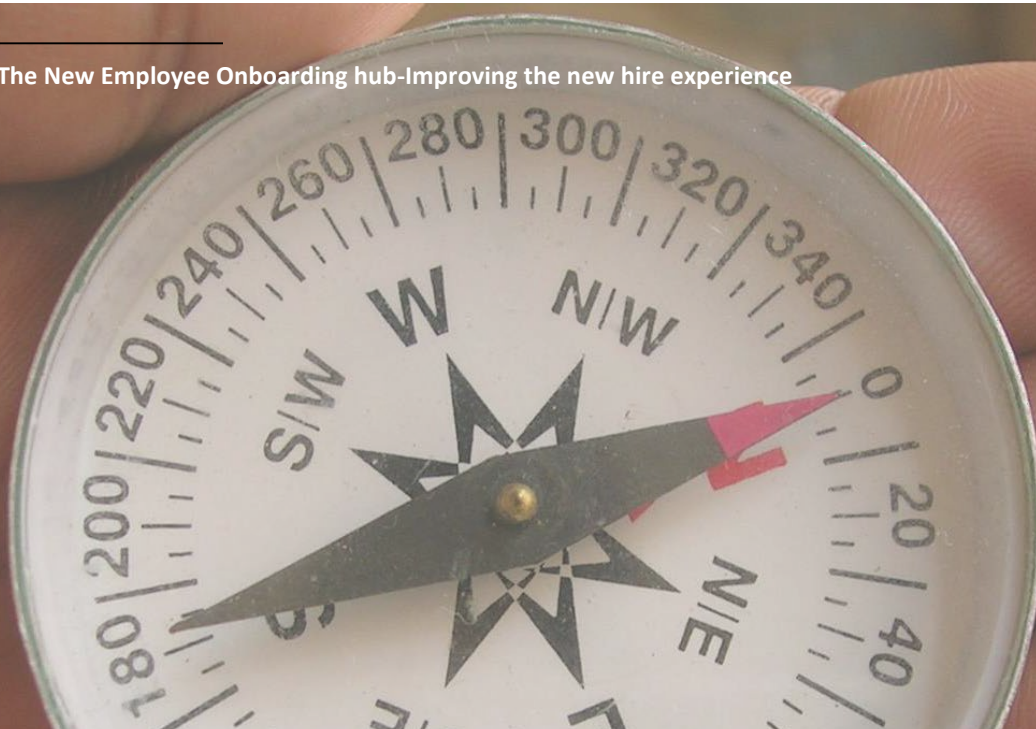
COUNTY NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Riverside County is the 4th most populous County in the State of California and the 10th most populous in the nation. The County of Riverside is comprised of over 40 dynamic departments, spanning from Eastvale to Blythe. During the in-person or virtual New Employee Orientation (or NEO), new hires learn more about the unique history and structure of Riverside County, as well as many of the resources and programs that are available to County employees. The new hire will need to be scheduled to attend the in-person orientation within 30-days of their hire date.

Some of the programs that are highlighted in New Employee Orientation include Learning & Organizational Development, Safety, Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), and much more! A brief summary is also provided regarding the various benefits and retirement packages available to County employees. New hires are also given a brief tutorial on how to navigate within the Human Resources website to access the varied HR divisions and services offered, such as mandatory training, personnel matters, union representation information and memorandums of understanding (MOU's).

New employee onboarding involves creating an end-to-end experience for new employees that begins *before* their first day on the job. Research has shown pre-onboarding new hires (after they sign their acceptance letter but before they officially join the company) can lead to higher performance and better retention rates. New employee onboarding also involves providing support on multiple levels within an organization, like corporate and departmental onboarding. Each onboarding level provides its own unique value, contributing to a comprehensive onboarding experience that each new employee will benefit from.⁵

⁵ Wolodarsky, The New Employee Onboarding hub-Improving the new hire experience



ONBOARDING MENTORS

To keep your new hires from becoming overwhelmed, assign them a mentor or “buddy” who can help them throughout the day. Having a buddy also gives a new team member a friendly face they know they can seek support from, in terms of explaining how things work and answering questions. This can help them to settle into their new role more quickly and reduce the chance of them feeling isolated or unsupported. The use of a buddy system may accelerate the productivity of new hires and enhance job satisfaction making it easier for employers to retain individuals. Such a system helps build an immediate personal connection between the new employee and the organization. Knowledgeable onboarding buddies can help new hires determine who relevant stakeholders are, how to navigate the matrix of different organizations, and think strategically when problem solving. They can also shed light on cultural norms and any unspoken rules that exist, which could lead to a much smoother transition into the organization.

87% say
Buddy
Programs
boost new
hire
proficiency

BENEFITS OF AN ONBOARDING MENTOR

Compliance

- Improves productivity.
- Enhances strategic business initiatives.
- More knowledge about other areas of the organization.
- Learning specific skills and knowledge relevant to personal goals.

Clarification

- Elevates knowledge transfer through retaining practical experience and wisdom gained from long-term employees.
- Vital feedback in key areas (communication, interpersonal relationships, technical abilities, change management, and leadership skills).
- Sharper focus on what is needed to grow professionally within the organization.

Culture

- Encourages retention and reduces turnover cost.
- Energy boost for career.
- Gaining an ally in promoting the organization's well-being.
- Learning about organization's culture and unspoken rules.

Connection

- Information exchange that goes both ways. Mentor gains insight from the mentee that can aid the mentor's professional and personal development.
- Satisfaction of sharing expertise with others.
- Links employees with valuable knowledge to those in need of such information.
- Access to mentor's expertise.
- Larger networks with more people.

BE A MENTOR OR PROVIDE ONE TO YOUR NEW HIRE

Every successful person has had a mentor at some point in their life and creating a mentoring culture will be very beneficial to your new employee. Virtual mentoring is a strategy that helps organizations foster meaningful relationships and maintain personal connections, even while team members are working from home. Being remote or unable to engage your mentor or mentee in-person is no reason to halt your mentoring relationship. Here are some tips for a successful virtual mentoring experience.

Preparation

The good mentoring meeting starts before the actual meeting, and just like physical meetings preparation is the key when it comes to conducting good and effective mentoring conversations. No later than a few days before the meeting, the mentee should send the agenda to their mentor. In this way the mentor can prepare for the topics that the mentee wants to work with, make some thoughts about the meeting and maybe take some notes on which questions or topics that the mentor thinks is important for the mentee's learning. Therefore, both the mentor and the mentee always have some preparation to do before the meetings, but the mentee's effort will often require more time.

Make sure your connection works well

Agree on which platform to use. There are a lot of free platforms available on the market, but we always recommend making a profile which is protected by a password. Use a laptop/computer rather than a tablet or smart phone which may result in less functionality available. Remember a headset. Before the meeting it is a good idea to test and make sure that your connection, sound and camera works. Make sure that your camera captures your picture approximately in the middle of the screen and is on level with your face. Ensure that you have appropriate lighting. It is also important to find an optimal place for the meeting – preferably in an enclosed space where there is as little ambient noise as possible. At the same time, it is important that you sit somewhere where you can talk privately about confidential and sensitive topics.

Establish Expectations

If you are moving to a virtual mentoring relationship for the first time or for an interim period, it's a great time to establish or re-establish expectations for the relationship. Without being able to meet in person, you might decide it's best to have a call once a week and an email exchange once or twice a week. Make sure both the mentor and mentee understand what each wants and expects. Find what works with both of your schedules, taking into consideration which tool of communication you'll use and how much availability you'll make for each other.

Be Accountable to one another

A mentor and mentee relationship revolves around trust. You're often relying on each other to make the situation beneficial for both parties. If you said you would look into a certain situation for your mentor or mentee, do it. Follow up on tasks you assigned one another. Establish upcoming projects, steps, or actions for both of you before your next meeting and give updates on what you are both working on.

Check in Regularly

When participants are virtual or remote, mentors should check in regularly. Sending updates about the program will remind participants of their commitment to the program and help them feel more connected to what's going on outside their personal mentoring connection. Emails and digital nudges are also a great way to remind mentors and mentees to engage with each other. With everything else going on in our worlds, it's easy for participants to let their connections fall by the wayside. Prompt mentors and mentees to set that next meeting, reply to that lingering email, or make that forgotten phone call.

Providing a mentor to your new employee will help them be more accountable for their success, build relationships in their department, and have a designated person to go to with questions and concerns. Their onboarding buddy is there to really help them settle in and get comfortable. Make sure all new hires know who their buddies are as close to day 1 as possible so they can reach out with questions.

It is important for the new employee to know that they are not alone. Have them set up informal virtual coffee chats/breaks with co-workers to get to know them and have a small break from learning.



MANDATED TRAINING

The County of Riverside requires that specific mandated training must be completed by all employees, as well as additional courses for managers and supervisors. A complete list of County Board mandated and legally required courses can be found on the [Learning & Organizational Development website](#).

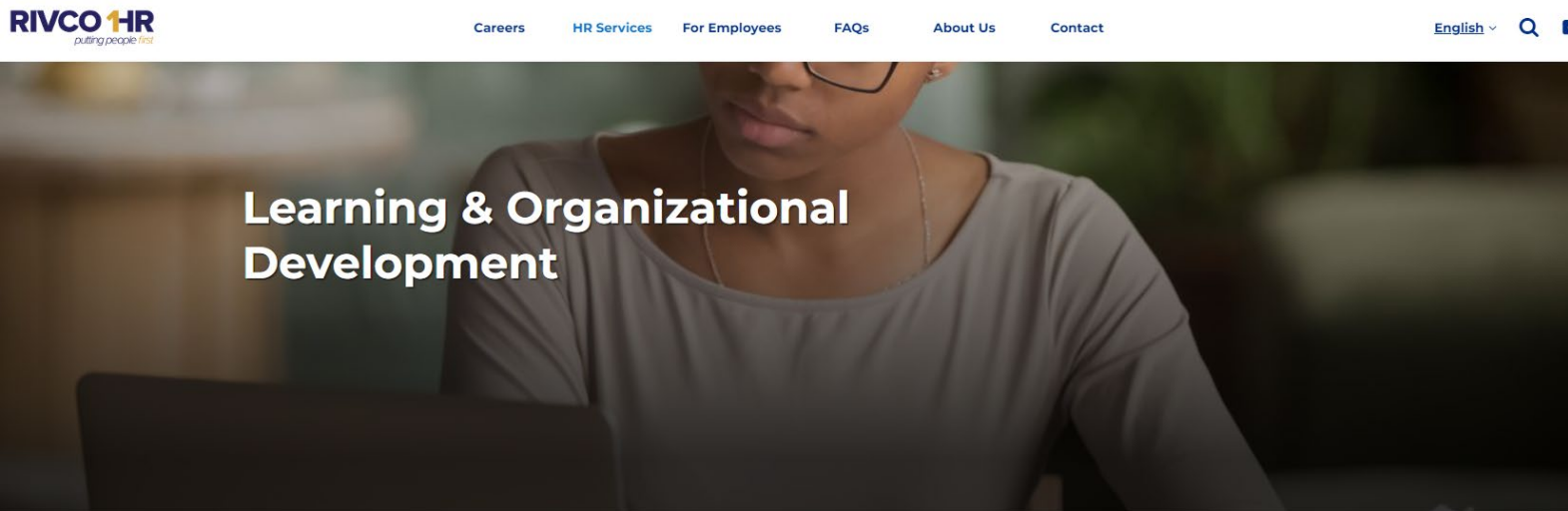
Regular Employee	Manager & Supervisor	
Course Name	Authority	Update Frequency
Disability Awareness	Form-11, 08/09/05 item 3/59	No time frame specified by policy
Disciplinary Process/Grievances	Board Policy C-23	No time frame specified by policy
Family and Medical Leave Act (Employee Leave Laws: FMLA, CFRA, and More)	Form-11, 06/03/03 item 3.15	No time frame specified by policy
ADA/FEHA for Managers and Supervisors	Form-11, 06/03/03 item 3.59 Board Policy A-74	No time frame specified by policy
Management Harassment Prevention	California Law AB1825	Every 2 years
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act	Board Policy A-73	Every 2 years
Repetitive Motion Injury	Safety Manual Doc #2005 as required by CAL OSHA	No time frame specified by policy
Violence in the Workplace for Managers and Supervisors	Board Policy C-27	As needed whenever new hazards are identified
A-50 Electronic Media and Use	Board Policy A-50	No time frame specified by policy
A- 58 Information Security Training	Board Policy A-58	Every year
C-35: Standards of Ethical Conduct to Address Fraud, Waste, Abuse	Board Policy C-35	No time frame specified by policy
Occupational Safety and Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (SB-553)	Board Policy C-27	Every year

Regular Employee	Manager & Supervisor	
Course Name	Authority	Update Frequency
Disability Awareness	Form-11, 08/09/05 item 3.59	No time frame specified by policy
Employee Harassment Prevention	Board Policy C-25	Every 2 years
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act	Board Policy A-73	Every 2 years
Repetitive Motion Injury	Safety Manual Doc #2005 as required by CAL OSHA	No time frame specified by policy
Employee Workplace Violence (offered both online & in classroom)	Board Policy C-27	No time frame specified by policy
A-50 Electronic Media and Use	Board Policy A-50	No update indicated by policy
A-58: Information Security Training	Board Policy A-58	Every year
C-35 Standards of Ethical Conduct to Address Fraud, Waste and Abuse	Board Policy C-35	No update indicated by policy
Occupational Safety and Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (SB-553)	Board Policy C-27	Every year

Many required courses are offered online, self-paced through RivCo Talent, and some are facilitated as live webinars. Employees may self-register for mandated training by logging into RivCo Talent. Access to the site can take up to 2 weeks after initial start date. Technical assistance with RivCo Talent is provided through RivCo Help by calling 951-955-9900. General support is available on the [website](#) or by email at rivcotalent@rivco.org.

To access the site, you can visit the [L&OD website](#) and click on “RivCo Talent Login” from the home page.

Learning and Organizational Development site: <https://rc-hr.com/hrlod>



- [RivCo Talent Login](#)
- [About Us](#) →
- [Mandated Training](#) →
- [Customer Support](#) →
- [Products and Services Guidebook](#) →
- [Leadership Resource Library \(LRL\)](#) → (Managers/Supervisors will have access to this site)

RIVCO HR Learning & Organizational Development continues its goal to improve Riverside County public service outcomes by enabling greatness in County departments, divisions, organizations and individuals through a multifaceted approach. Offering world class Live In-person Learning Opportunities, Recruitment Programs, Organizational Development and Consulting Services, Career/Educational Coaching Services, Educational Support Program (ESP), Internship, College Relations and Community Events, Onboarding, Online Learning, eLearning Development Services, Professional Certifications, and Administration of Riverside County Learning Management System.

MONTH ONE EXPERIENCE

The first month will be filled with trainings on job duties, company policies, and culture. Be sure to introduce your new hire to team members, managers, and other coworkers outside of the team. It is also important to do a one month check in with your employee to make sure they are comfortable, happy, and engaged. Your new hire should be working closely with their mentor, getting all their questions answered while learning their new role.

FIRST MONTH DESIRED OUTCOMES

COMPLIANCE

- They are continuing to develop in their role.
- Discuss work, performance and professional development goals.
- Ensure the employees are signed up for all relevant training.
- Ensure the employees have completed all paperwork, orientation events and training.

CLARIFICATION

- Schedule check-ins with manager regularly or from time to time depending on role.
- Provide timely constructive feedback on an ongoing basis.
- Solicit feedback from employees and be available to answer questions.
- Meet with employees and onboarding buddy to review and answer questions.

CULTURE

- They are aware of their performance and impact on the organization.

CONNECTION

- Employees continues to build relationships.
- Continue introducing employees to key people and ensure employees are introduced at key events.

FIRST QUARTER EXPERIENCE

The first three months are a critical time in establishing your new employee's success. It's essential to train and manage new employees effectively, while making the experience personal and transformative. The desired First Quarter outcomes are outlined below. Also provided on the next page is a list of check-in questions to ask your new employee at the first quarter mark. These conversations will help create an open working relationship and help identify how you can help the employee transition in their new role, team, and department.

FIRST QUARTER DESIRED OUTCOMES

COMPLIANCE

- The employees can work independently for the most part and contribute to team deliverables.
- Provide information on ongoing learning opportunities and resources available.

CLARIFICATION

- Meet for 3-month performance check-in, which can offer constructive feedback for continued development and growth.
- Employees are aware of their role and responsibilities.
- Ensure the work for the employee is challenging and meaningful.
- Create professional development goals.
- Ask if they feel equipped to perform their role with the training they have received.
- Have the employees provide feedback on orientation process and training sessions they have attended.

CULTURE

- They continue to show signs of growth in their role and socially.
- Discuss issues relating to employees well-being.
- Have planned, yet informal, conversations about how employees are doing at work and in the organization.

CONNECTION

- Continue to have Manager check-in from time to time.
- Check-in with the employee and their assigned onboarding buddy to see how things are progressing.

FIRST QUARTER CHECK IN QUESTIONS

These are great questions to ask your new employee on your first quarter check in, or 3rd monthly One-on-One meeting.

- 1. How's it going? How do you feel so far in your new job?**
- 2. What are you enjoying most about your role?**
- 3. Is the job/team/department what you expected?**
- 4. What has surprised you?**
- 5. Has onboarding been helpful? What would you add or change?**
- 6. What tools and resources do you need as we go forward?**
- 7. Do you feel like you have gotten to know your coworkers well?**
- 8. Do you feel out of the loop about anything?**
- 9. What should we provide to new employees that we have missed?**
- 10. What is working? What is not working?**
- 11. What about your role, the team, or department is still unclear?**
- 12. How can I be a better supervisor to you?**
- 13. As your supervisor, what can I do to make your transition better?**

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Reaching the one-year milestone is important because this is when new employees are most likely to leave their place of employment. The one-year mark is the right time to look back, praise your staff for their achievements, and help them to continue down the winning path. One-on-one meetings, communications, consistent feedback and constant engagement are the cornerstones of a successful onboarding program. The end of the first year is a perfect time for your employee's performance evaluation. The table below details the desired outcomes for your employees first year of employment.

FIRST YEAR DESIRED OUTCOMES

COMPLIANCE

- They understand how their deliverables and role affects others in the organization.
- Discuss the year ahead and their role in it.
- Discuss professional development goals and relevant learning opportunities

CLARIFICATION

- Employee's are fully engaged in their role, are confident enough to work autonomously, make decisions at their authorized level and contribute to team goals.
- Provide Formal and or informal feedback at regular intervals.
- Seek feedback for their experience at the organization thus far. Such as employee's expectations of role, their use of skills and knowledge and areas they need support with.

CULTURE

- Employee has a strong sense of the organization's culture and mission.
- Solicit feedback on improving the onboarding process.

CONNECTION

- They have effective working relationships within their team and across teams.
- Celebrate and recognize each employee contribution.
- Support and encourage employee to engage in cross-functional teams, work and non-work related events.

CONDUCTING ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

The supervisor-employee relationship is an important part of any department within the County. All teams, divisions and departments are built on those relationships. One - on-one meetings are a great way to have open communication between supervisor and employee. The employee's role is to take responsibility for what they need from you as their supervisor. Your responsibility is to provide support and add value that helps the employee perform well. The frequency with which you have one -on-ones can vary depending on the size of your team and how experienced your employees are. It doesn't matter how often they occur, but it is important that you schedule them on your calendar as a repeating event.



One-on-One Meeting Guide

The Basics of Effective One-on-Ones	
What are the BASCIS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly Scheduled • Rarely Missed • Primary Focus on The Team Member • Notes & Follow up Critical
WHEN Do We Do One-on-Ones?	
Good Managers Rarely Miss Them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Most, Weekly with Each Team Member • For Some, Bi-Weekly With Each Team Member
WHERE Do We Conduct One-on-Ones?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KEY is NOT IN PUBLIC-- It does NOT have to be "in private" • If you have an office, in your office with door closed • If you have a cubicle, at your desk, with sensitivity- it really does work 	
WHAT Do We Do and HOW Do We Do It?	
How Long? 30 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Minutes for Them • 10 Minutes for you • 10 Minutes for Development
HOW Do I PREPARE?	
Ask yourself These Simple Questions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do my follow up notes say I need to check on? Am I committed to following up? What notes should I make now? How might I ask that question? Am I really committed to following up? • What do I need to be sure to communicate? What behavior of his/hers am I focusing on? What projects or work am I involved in? What organizational issues/ news/ efforts can I share? What meetings have I just attended- what did I learn? What are the common items I need to get out to everyone- About schedules or projects or workload or our team? 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What positive feedback can I give? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What adjusting feedback can I give? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there something I can delegate? what project, task or work would be helpful to their development? 	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there something I can delegate? what project, task or work would be helpful to their development? 	
What Are Some Effective Questions I can Ask?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about what you've been working on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What questions do you have about this project?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about your week- what's it been like? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do you think I can be most helpful?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about your family/weekend/activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are you going to approach this?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about anything you stumbled over. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts on my changes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you update me on Project X? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you on track to meet the deadline? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, you're going to do "X" by Tuesday, right?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What questions do you have about the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think we can do this better?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What areas are ahead of schedule? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your future goals in this area?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What areas of your work are you confident about? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your plans to get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worries you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you/we do differently next time?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What suggestions do you have? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about what you've learned on this project.

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Pre One-on-One Meeting Questions

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH ME IN OUR NEXT ONE ON ONE MEETING? *

ANY PRESSING ISSUES?

- YES
- NO

ANY CHRONIC FRUSTRATIONS?

- YES
- NO

IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO REMOVE ROADBLOCKS TO YOUR PROGRESS?

- YES
- NO

ADDITIONAL INFO

WHAT FEEDBACK DO YOU HAVE FOR ME?

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One on One Summary

SUPERVISOR: _____

DATE: _____

EMPLOYEE: _____

Workload: _____

Challenges/Concerns: _____

Successes/Accomplishments: _____

Goals: _____

Training Needs: _____

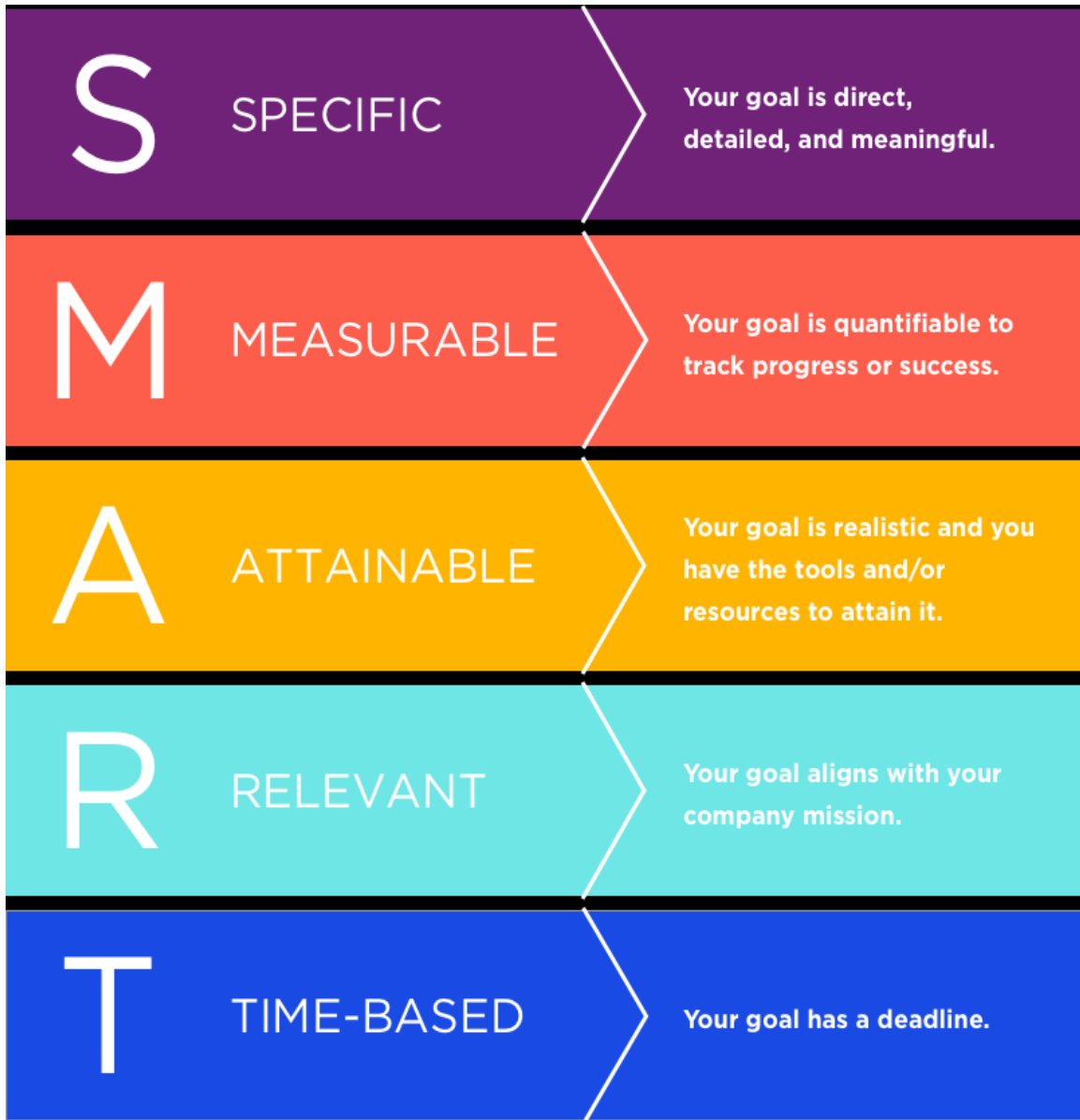
Supervisor Follow-up: _____

Comments: _____

SUPERVISOR: _____ EMPLOYEE: _____

GOAL SETTING

Goals setting is an important component to your regular one-on-one meetings and performance reviews with your employees/ Goals should be written so that they are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**imely (SMART). Using SMART performance goals leaves little to the imagination and provides clear communication between employees and supervisors. Before you set your goals, you should review the organizational objectives and justify what you can do to contribute to them. Your efforts will only pay off if you know why you are setting the SMART goals and you align them to the wider organizational goals of the department you work for.



S.M.A.R.T. Goals Worksheet

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS WORKSHEET

Crafting S.M.A.R.T. Goals are designed to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic and determine a deadline. When writing S.M.A.R.T. Goals use concise language, but use relevant information. These are designed to help you succeed so be positive when you answer the questions.

INITIAL GOAL	Write the goal you have in mind.
S SPECIFIC	What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?
M MEASURABLE	How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?
A ACHIEVABLE	Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort on par with what the goal will achieve?

R RELEVANT	Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?
T TIME-BOUND	What's the deadline and is it realistic?
S.M.A.R.T. GOAL	Review what you have written and craft a new goal statement based on what the answers to the questions above have revealed.

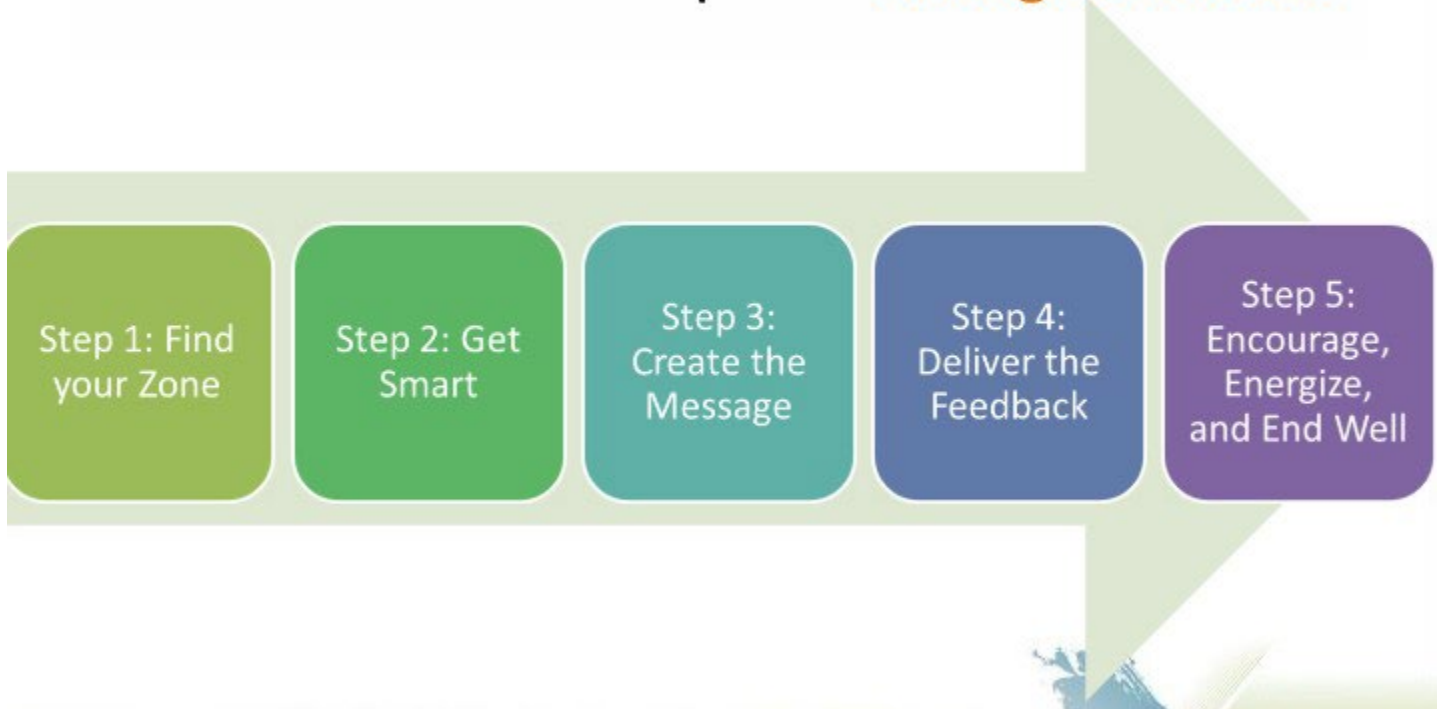
FEEDBACK LOOP INFORMATION

Feedback is an essential ingredient for continual improvement. Feedback is information that is shared with a person or group for the distinct purpose of improving results or relationships. Effective feedback is not venting, shaming, blaming, or yielding to excuses.

We live in a feedback rich world. We see feedback done well and poorly in a variety of different places, such as on professional sports teams, reality TV, and of course, in a professional setting. Continual feedback, when performed correctly, can work for you and your team as well! Studies on feedback in the workplace show that high performing teams communicate and provide feedback in a positive manner over 80% of the time.

There are five best practice steps to providing feedback, as described below. Use this model for giving feedback to your team members, and coach them on the model as well!

Five Best Practice Steps for Giving Feedback



FIVE BEST PRACTICE STEPS FOR GIVING FEEDBACK

STEP 1: FIND YOUR ZONE

Get yourself in to the right zone for providing feedback before you give it.

How is your energy? When you begin a feedback session energized, you will maintain better self-control.

How is your attitude? We often give feedback when we are still feeling angry, hurt, or disappointed. When we provide feedback under these conditions, we are not only hurting the relationship, we are also hurting ourselves.

Are you in the right environment to provide feedback? If your goal in offering feedback is consistent with helping your team member improve, you must select an environment that creates the right energy and attitude to have the conversation.



STEP 2: GET SMART

Be purposeful in your feedback. Take the time to connect the feedback you will be giving to how your information will help or hinder the other person's success or improvement. What are your reasons for providing the feedback? What is your intent? What is in it for the receiver?

STEP 3: CREATE THE MESSAGE

Words carry our meaning. Be intentional in what you say. Ensure you are crafting your message with words and phrases that are specific and observable. Your feedback will be best communicated when all persons seeing or hearing the conversation could also come to the same conclusion.

STEP 4: DELIVER THE FEEDBACK

Deliver the feedback using three steps:

Ask for permission: Asking your team member if they are open to receiving feedback demonstrates respect and puts them in a more receptive mode.

Be appreciative: Be appreciative of the positive contribution that this person makes to the team and to the department. Showing appreciation helps set the stage for open acceptance to receiving feedback.

Share the feedback: Share the feedback in a way that allows your team member to hear and accept it. Pay attention to your body language and other non-verbals during the feedback conversation.

STEP 5: ENCOURAGE, ENERGIZE, AND END WELL

Share the feedback in a way that allows your team member to choose to change. Offer your support, encourage dialogue, and listen attentively during the conversation. End by determining the next steps for follow-up, if necessary, and ensure you thank them for being open to receiving the feedback.

ONBOARDING TRULY MATTERS

Onboarding is the process of integrating new employees into an organization. It's important to note the difference between onboarding and orientation. Orientation is an event, typically lasting one day, that usually begins the onboarding process. But onboarding continues for months to even years after an employee is hired⁶. The importance of providing a welcoming environment and

helping forge connections during an employee's first days cannot be overlooked. Clear guidelines and expectations are critical to setting an employee up for success.

The best onboarding programs communicate performance goals early, lay out a plan for progress, and give new hires opportunities to ask questions. Having your employee feel more engaged with their new department is one of the best ways to boost retention rates. The use of this guidebook ensures you are ready to make a lasting first impression with a powerful and thoughtful onboarding experience. We hope you found the resources and tools provided in this guidebook helpful! Happy onboarding!

¹¹ <https://www.strayboots.com/blog/why-is-onboarding-so-important/>

Organizations with standard onboarding process experience 50% greater job retention

Strong Onboarding programs increase productivity up to 70%

77% of employees who had a formal onboarding process hit their first performance goals.



STAY CONNECTED

County of Riverside Website

<https://rivco.org/>

County of Riverside Human Resources Website

<https://rc-hr.com/>

Learning & Organizational Development E-Mail Address

HRLOD@RIVCO.ORG

Learning & Organizational Development Website

<https://rc-hr.com/hrlod>

TEMPLATE APPENDIX

ONBOARDING CHECKLIST.....	Link to Onboarding Checklist
FIRST QUARTER CHECK IN QUESTIONS.....	Link To First Quarter Check In Questions
HIRING MANAGER: TASKS TO DO ON A NEW HIRE'S FIRST DAY	Link to Manager's to Do List
ONE-ON-ONE MEETING GUIDE	Link to One-on-One Meeting Guide
ONE-ON-ONE SAMPLE MEETING NOTES	Link to One-on-One Notes Page
ONLINE COUNTY NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION FLYER.....	Link to New Employee Orientation Flyer
PRE ONE-ON-ONE MEETING QUESTIONS	Link to Pre One-on-One Questions
SAMPLE PRE-BOARDING CHECKLIST	Link to Pre-boarding Checklist
SAMPLE NEW HIRE WELCOME EMAIL	Link to Welcome Email
S.M.A.R.T. GOALS WORKSHEET.....	Link to SMART Goals Worksheet
VIRTUAL NEW HIRE WELCOME E-MAIL SAMPLE	Link to Virtual Welcome Email
WEEK ONE CHECKLIST	Link to Week One Checklist
90 QUESTIONS TO ASK NEW HIRES IN THE FIRST 90 DAYS.....	Link to NEOGOV Questions

