

Virtual Onboarding In the New Normal

You're

HIRED



Introduction

Onboarding new team members in the new normal is increasingly becoming a virtual experience because of the continued changes we are adapting to during the coronavirus pandemic.

It's forced us to look at how and where we work, it's continually making us rewrite the playbook when it comes to welcoming new colleagues into our teams safely with many companies having to transpose the entire process into a virtual experience.

The good news is the old practices of face to face onboarding can easily be repurposed to give your new team member the best possible start , whilst also keeping your recruitment processes streamlined.

In this pack you will find our top tips for making your virtual onboarding experience the very best it can be.



I: Converting Old Processes

A successful remote onboarding experience won't be that dissimilar from the classic "first day at the office" experience we've all had. The trick is to take your best practices and convert them to benefit your new hires experience as well as benefit your business' needs.

Communication (as always) will be key here. Speak with stakeholders and your new hires to survey that the process is adding value to their needs and make absolutely sure that once your processes are defined that these are communicated and documented across your business.

It's amazing how small things can quickly become big issues with virtual onboarding and the last thing you want is for your own onboarding process to be a negative experience.

Standard Best Practices

New Virtual Best practices

List of colleagues and Departments



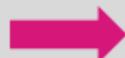
Amend you list to include best methods of communication, such as email, Zoom or telephone call.

Set a schedule of work/training for week one



Add lunch and rest breaks to the schedule.

Team lunch for new hires



Schedule a video call with the team with ice breaker questions or exercises to start the "getting to know you" process.

Buddy system



Have your new hires buddy reach out before day one and introduce themselves in a "welcome call".

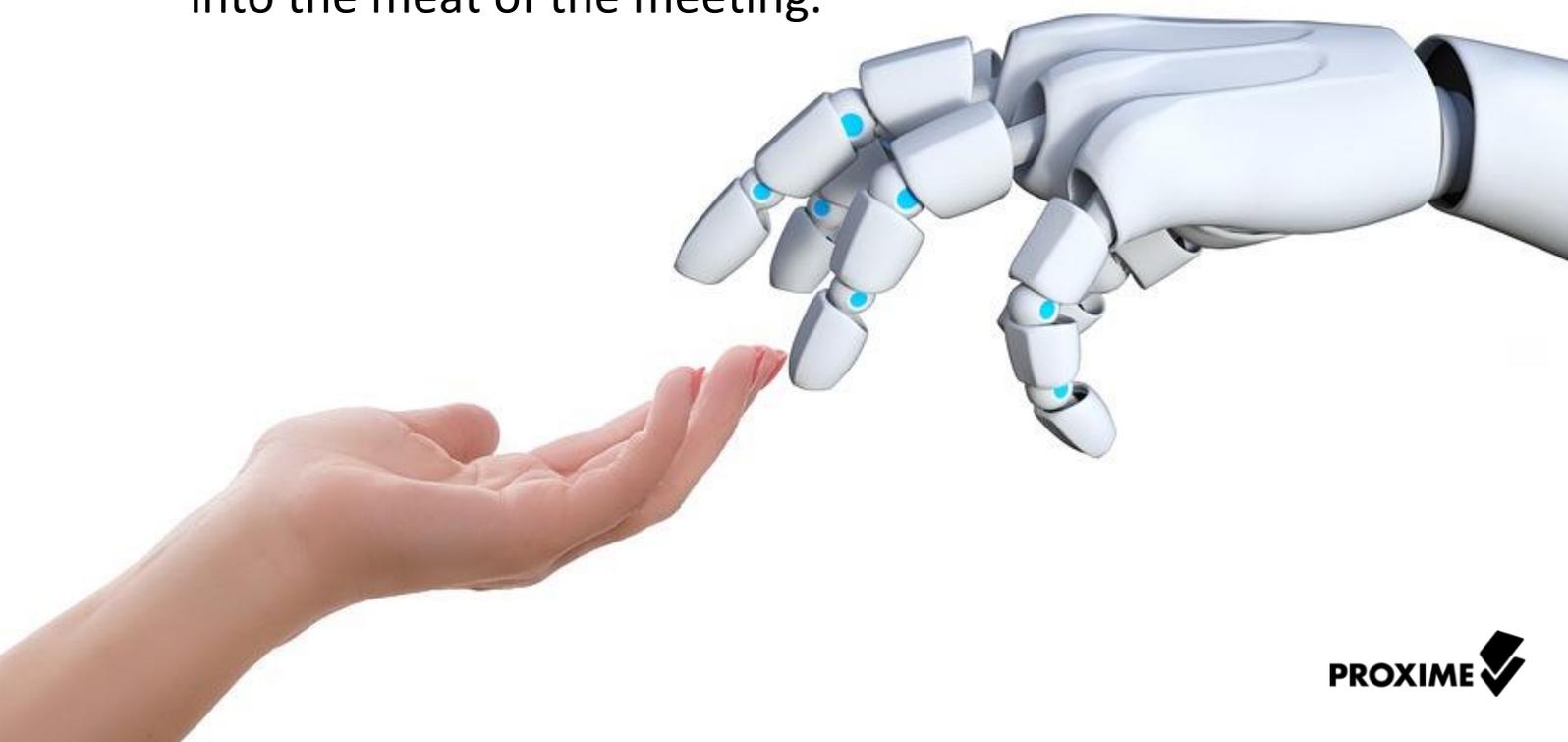


II: Call out Cultural Norms

So, your team member is onboard, but very few people have worked remotely before and the “usual” office practices are very much a thing of the past from here on in.

The faster you can bring your new hire into the loop on their new normal, the more “comfortable” and “included” they will be within the team. Make sure to let them know the best practices and expectations for reaching out within the team and let them know. E.g.:

- √ When to text, email, Teams/Zoom, or call.
- √ Identify who’s would be invited to meetings.
- √ Swapping phone to video calls where possible.
- √ Moving a long “chat” conversation to phone/video to make working more efficient.
- √ Kick off your meetings with “social” space before getting into the meat of the meeting.

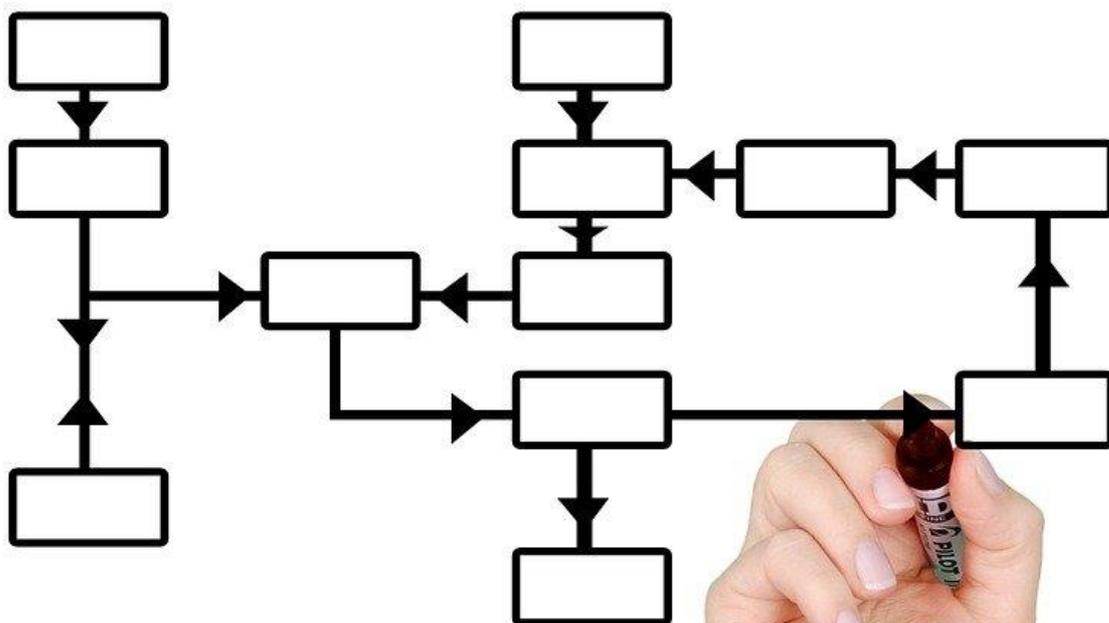


III: Set Your Standards

The amount of communication that is lost when not meeting in person is vast. Nonverbal cues and body language for example are very easily lost in translation within the virtual workplace. Be sure to communicate your standards and expectations clearly as part of your onboarding process.

“Your new recruit is both excited and nervous to be joining your company and team, this is their most receptive time and the experience of the onboarding process is vital to retaining quality staff/recruits. Set clear targets for day 1 week 1 and month 1. These must be measurable and tangible and realistic.”

Roy O’Brien – Business Development Director



IV: Structure their week

The time in an office for “checking in” or “meeting at the water cooler” or just having a coffee together is gone, those unstructured interactions can play a big part in building up a new hires structure in a new environment.

Think about how you expect your new hire to spend their time during the first week. Giving them a meaningful structure with objectives and tasks will focus them on getting up to speed and maintain productivity as they find their feet in their new normal.

“It is important to have a structured induction process that brings new recruits up to speed effectively, in these current times this can prove even more challenging. Plan to share activities among your team and segment the process, this will allow the new recruit to develop working relationships with peers. Do not be tempted to skip elements due to difficulty in scheduling calls and access to other departments, this can often lead to other problems later down the line.

Roy O’Brien – Business Development Director

V: Keep things fresh

Variety is the spice of life! During your new hires first few weeks, keep in mind what their experience will be like, put yourself in their shoes. You wouldn't want to be on a full day of zoom training calls so don't do it to them.

Can you vary their first few weeks while they get up to speed? Break up the onboarding experience where appropriate, providing variety will keep them engaged while they adjust to a remote work environment.

“New joiners will face a degree of trepidation about what they've got themselves in to. By designing an onboarding process that provides comfort and confidence, new employees will feel less stressed and will more quickly assimilate the company's culture and environment. This is particularly true for remote onboarding processes as additional thought and guidance needs to be provided around communication tools and communication styles.”

Rob Williams – Director of Recruiting



VI: Introduce Everybody

Well everybody relevant at least 😊. Take the time to introduce your new hire to key colleagues and stakeholders within the business. Have them explain their roles and responsibilities within the organisation especially if your new hire will need to speak with them on any kind of a regular basis.

Make sure your new hire is able to engage with other team members at all levels of the business from interns to company heads. No matter what level your new hire is this will paint them a great picture of the business at large and kickstart their engagement within the company.

“In terms of having an approachable business it’s essential to build a strong rapport with colleagues across all levels of seniority. It also means that staff are able to communicate effectively and aren’t afraid of expressing new ideas and potential initiatives and better contributors to the business.”

Jonny Corps – Expert Unicorn Hunter



VII: Virtually Socialising

Working remotely is very different than a thriving office environment. Make sure your new hire has an outlet to socialise with members of the team. Whether you use the buddy system or an online Zoom tea break, make sure there is something in place for your new hire (and the rest of your team) to socialise.

“A few of the benefits for virtual onboarding is a faster, broader and a better communication stream. As long as mental wellbeing for employees (new and old) are included within your process, you will have the perfect solution for your virtual onboarding.”

David Gadd – Director of Talent



VIII: Don't stop there!

Onboarding doesn't stop after week one. Your new hire will be learning the business whilst getting up to speed for potentially the next few weeks and even months ahead. Make sure your process caters for this on-going experience, not only will you be able to coach and mentor your new hire they will feel a much more valued member of your team.

It's a big mistake to think that onboarding "just happens"; 30% of job seekers leave a job within the first 90 days. It's critical that the onboarding process delivers high levels of engagement. Careful planning will provide new employees with the information, relationships and tools they need.

Rob Williams – Director of Recruiting



In Summary...

Remote onboarding shouldn't be something you let keep you up at night. We are all experiencing changes to our recruitment and onboarding process in this new normal and the situation is far from perfect.

Make sure you show empathy and explain the structure you have defined for your new hire as part of their onboarding. Keep updating your processes as you find your own best practices along the way, you'll have yourself a top notch virtual onboarding experience for all your new hires.



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