Your Guide To the 30-60-90 Framework for New Employee Onboarding

Your hiring manager did it!

After scouring the marketplace, the perfect person to fill an open position has been found. But no matter how enthusiastic and knowledgeable the new hire is, it will take time until they can function within your organization. This is where a 30-60-90 plan comes in.

While orientation may only last a few days, a simple, customized 30-60-90 outline can help set expectations around learning milestones so a new hire feels supported. It also lets everyone on the team know what the new hire will learn, when they'll learn it, and who will support them during their first few months.

The 30-60-90 plan helps everyone, including the new hire, remember that they aren't going to know everything on day one—or even day 59. Guiding a manager and new hire back to the checklist if issues arise can reduce stress and help make sure your organization is providing an effective onboarding experience.

What Does Each Phase Entail?

Each month-long segment of a 30-60-90 plan has a specific focus. Days 1-30 are centered around learning. Days 31-60 build on that learning. Finally, days 61-90 turn more heavily towards execution and letting the new hire shine!

Here's a basic description of each month-long learning phase, along with examples of how a hiring manager might tailor the plan for a junior marketer.

DAYS 1-30

A new employee is getting used to everything from how their company login works to where the bathroom is (if they're in-office). The hiring manager should help them understand the organization's mission, work tools and ongoing projects, all while setting small, manageable goals for each key focus area.

In the junior marketer's case, 30-day goals might look something like:

Learn company tools: Get familiar with the content management system.

Get comfortable with our culture: Attend company values and history training, join an employee resource group and attend a team lunch.

Learn our product/services: Attend two demos.

Complete a small project: Learn our social media platforms and begin monitoring online conversations.

Achieve a small goal: Adopt our brand voice in written communications.

DAYS 31-60

Month two should involve more collaboration and greater responsibilities. Managers can start to transition from training to more learning-by-doing, establishing bigger, more impactful objectives.

A junior marketer's 60-day targets could include:

Complete a larger project: Finalize conference-planning activities.

Take on longer-term responsibilities: Learn our metrics tracking methods and begin weekly analytics.

Work with other teams: Collaborate with PR to pitch speaking opportunities.

Get used to routine processes: Schedule weekly 1:1s and track metrics and daily tasks.

DAYS 61-90

By now, a new hire is getting acclimated to their role. They're able to accomplish tasks with less guidance—or at least know who to reach out to when they need help. It's time for the manager to begin holding the new hire accountable for established goals and metrics.

The junior marketer should now be able to:

Take on bigger responsibilities: Continue previously assigned tasks and meetings and take over case study development.

Complete a project independently: Create a monthly webinar calendar and coordinate a webinar development and execution plan independently.

Manage ongoing tasks and responsibilities: Schedule and update assigned projects via the marketing calendar.

Onboarding Checklist Template

Encourage your hiring managers to use the 30-60-90 plan for incoming hires. Have the manager get started by thinking:

- What is this person's specific role and purpose within the organization?

- What key contributions will they make to our team?

- How should their responsibilities be structured so learning segments are logical, manageable and align with organizational goals?

Then, have the manager customize the following, adding lines as necessary but making sure learning targets are reasonable. Assure the manager that their new hire will be more productive if they can resist the urge to overload them early on.

Role: _____

GOALS

Days 1-30: Learn

- ☐ Learn company tools
- ☐ Get comfortable with our culture
- ☐ Learn our product/service
- ☐ Complete a small project
- ☐ Achieve a small goal

Days 30-60: Build

- ☐ Complete a larger project
- ☐ Take on longer-term responsibilities
- ☐ Work with other teams
- ☐ Get used to routine processes

Days 60-90: Execute

- ☐ Take on bigger responsibilities
- ☐ Complete a project independently
- ☐ Manage ongoing tasks and responsibilities

You've Set It—Now Don't Forget It!

Nicely done! You've encouraged your hiring managers to create a more formalized onboarding experience. But keep in mind, it's always a good idea for you or another HR team member to keep a pulse on how onboarding is going by:

Checking in with the hiring manager and employee regularly.

Using onboarding surveys at key milestones to establish a consistent cadence for collecting feedback on both an employee's onboarding experience and a manager's onboarding plan.

Congratulating the employee and manager when milestone successes are achieved.

These steps have an added benefit of reinforcing the idea that open communication at all levels helps everyone perform at their best.

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