

Employee Onboarding: *Safe, Productive, and Engaged From Day One!*

Richard Stup, Ph.D.
Agricultural Workforce Specialist
Cornell University
rstup@cornell.edu
agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu

What is Onboarding?

- It is an overall business process to bring new employees into the farm business, complete necessary paperwork, equip them with safety and performance knowledge and skills, and make them **feel connected** to a worthwhile team.
- Onboarding can increase employee safety, performance and retention.
- It is focused on the new employee as a person, not just as a worker.
- **Safe, Productive, and Engaged...*from Day 1!***

Levels of Onboarding

4. Connection: building work relationships, finding your place, gaining commitment.

3. Culture: values, philosophies, traditions, and norms.

2. Clarity: role clarity and performance expectations.

1. Compliance: basic compliance with regulations and policies.

Source: Bauer, T. N. (2010). *Onboarding new employees: Maximizing success*, SHRM Foundation, an affiliate of the Society for Human Resource Management.

Project Components

1. Onboarding template for farms to easily adapt and use.
 - Overall organization and regulatory compliance.
2. Dedicated web presence at Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development (agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu)
3. Resources and learning experiences on how to train more effectively.
4. Resources to support SOPs, job descriptions, employee handbooks, and employee records and training documentation.
5. Culture and connection activities to help new employees find their place as a long-term member of the team.
6. NYCAMH safety resources.



The Onboarding Template: A Checklist and Compliance Tool, Customized for Your Farm Business

Items to Complete by the End of [Day 1](#)

About the Farm

1.Mission. Share the mission or vision that guides your farm business. Share important values that your new employee should know and appreciate.

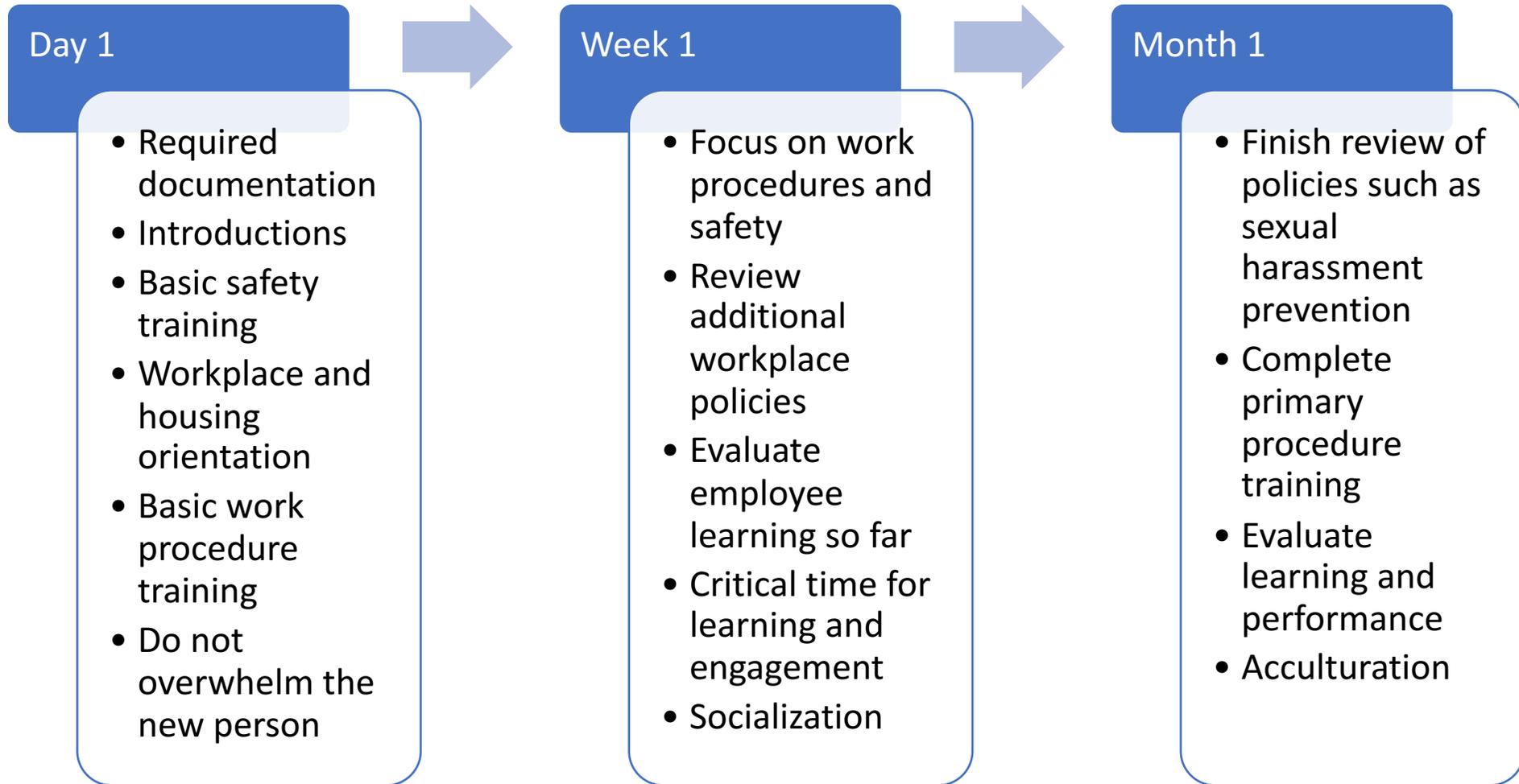
2.Organization Chart.

- a) Who is your new employee's direct supervisor?
- b) What other positions should they know about?
- c) Who should they go to for help or questions?

3.Facility Overview. Give your new employee an orienting tour about the farm.

- a) Provide a map with the location and name of buildings.
- b) Identify location of important safety resources:
 - i. Fire extinguishers
 - ii. Safety data sheets (SDS)
 - iii. Eye wash stations
 - iv. Emergency contact numbers
 - v. Location of equipment operation manuals
 - vi. Show location of personal protective equipment

Planned Onboarding Phases



Who Should Lead Onboarding?

- Ideally the direct supervisor leads onboarding but others will be involved such as the owner/HR manager, and other trainers.
- One person should be responsible for seeing that onboarding is carried out consistently.
- Consultant/advisor helps farm prepare for onboarding and provides support as needed, but does not lead onboarding.
- Trainers should be qualified to train.
- An owner should be present on Day 1.



Summary

1. Develop a customized onboarding plan using project resources and the support of an advisor/consultant.
2. Use your onboarding tools and plan with new employees to comply with employment laws, complete documentation, train more effectively, and connect with your new employees.
3. Follow up and evaluate to ensure that new employees have what they need to perform well.
4. Enjoy better work performance more quickly, safer and more engaged employees, less turnover, and peace of mind with your employment law compliance.