

CHEMISTRY STAFFING

Onboarding Playbook

A Guidebook for New Employee
Onboarding in Churches

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner of the page. It features several light blue plus signs (+) and circles (o) scattered across the area. Two large, curved arrows, also in light blue, are positioned over the plus signs and circles, one pointing towards the top right and another pointing towards the bottom left.

First impressions are a big deal.

We all instinctively know this:

- Our churches have first impressions teams tasked with ensuring that a first-time guest feels comfortable enough to come back.
- We spend a lot of time making sure that our websites look good so that a new family in the area will join us for Sunday worship.
- We make sure that our kid's ministry areas are kept clean, bright, and well staffed so that a new family will feel comfortable trusting us with their children.

First impressions are a big deal.

They matter to people visiting our church, they matter to people we interview with, and they matter to people who join our staff team. The way we treat a new member of our staff goes a long way to helping them settle into your team and can help ensure that they will be a member of your team for years to come.

Imagine what it would be like to move your family across the country into an unfamiliar community, into a new home, and then showing up to your new office only to find that it hasn't been emptied of the last occupant's mess. Add to that the stress of blindly navigating the new office systems, email accounts, and relationships without a guide. Friends of mine have shared stories of their first day on church staff similar to this. Arriving in the office as if no one was expecting them, their immediate supervisor taking the day off, and feeling as though they are left to figure it out on their own.

The truth is, you can have the **best search process on Earth**, but if you fail to onboard your new staff member well, the chances of this becoming a long-term, healthy fit **decline significantly** from day one.

process is the onboarding plan. As you develop your search plan, take the time to intentionally develop an onboarding plan to be implemented after your candidate accepts the position. Being intentional to help walk through one of the most stressful times in someone's life will build a solid foundation that will pay huge benefits in the season to come.

Compare that walking into the office for the first time to find your office clean and ready with a bowl of your favorite snacks, a schedule of your day laying on your desk, and a designated guide to help you settle into your office and familiarize yourself with all the different pieces of life on staff at your new church. All the while, people are (non-awkwardly) checking in with your family, helping them adjust to their new context and settle into their new rhythms.

Which experience would you prefer?

The truth is, you can have the best search process on Earth, but if you fail to onboard your new staff member well, the chances of this becoming a long-term, healthy fit decline significantly from day one. One of the most forgotten portions of the search

What does an onboarding plan look like? On the following pages, we will outline a suggested onboarding plan. We divide it into four distinct stages:

1 Pre-Arrival

From the time your new teammate accepts the offer until the night before they officially start. This is a great time to begin building excitement for your team and your newest teammate and make them feel truly welcomed. This also helps to minimize the stress of moving to a new home and congregation.

2 Day One

Your teammate's first day in office. A well thought through experience on day one helps to lessen the anxiety and awkwardness of starting at a new church. Create space for casual connections, familiarize them with their new environment, and allow them to begin to settle into the daily rhythms of your church.

3 Week One

The first seven days, when new patterns are developed, and rhythms begin to take root. A well-developed onboarding process, complete with designated guides to check in with them and ensure that your new teammate and their family are adjusting well to their transition will help with the dip that comes after the first day in a new position.

4 The First 90

From the end of the first week through the conclusion of their 90-day evaluation. This is an incredibly valuable, but often neglected, period in your new teammate's tenure at your church. Take advantage of their outside perspective, help them set healthy rhythms, and follow through on the commitments made during the interview and onboarding process.

You will notice that each section has space to assign the name of the person responsible to oversee it, the anticipated date of completion, and room for notes related to the specific task. We also strongly recommend that one person on your team leads the overall process, holding people accountable to fulfilling their part of the process, and ensuring that your new team member, and their family, feels loved, encouraged, and supported as they experience the stress of starting a new job and moving to a new community.

Overwhelmed?

Chemistry Staffing can help.

At Chemistry Staffing, we are committed to helping churches find a long-term healthy fit for their ministry staff positions. We partner with churches to help them create a healthy search process that finds candidates that align with the church theologically, culturally, personality-wise, and have the skill set required to do the job. This kind of alignment creates a healthy foundation that leads to genuine chemistry between your new teammate and your church.

This process, combined with a well-designed onboarding experience ensures that your new teammate feels nurtured and supported through two of the most stressful experiences in a person's life: moving and starting a new job. We'd love to help you develop your search process. Follow [this link](#) to schedule a free consultation with our team.

START DATE

HIRE DATE

ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

EMPLOYEE

ONBOARDER

PHASE 1: PRE-ARRIVAL

Human Resources (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Check item as complete**
- Announce the hire to staff and congregation
- Create a personnel File
- Place signed offer letter in the personnel file
- Send a welcome gift to family
- Send New Hire Paperwork:
 - Background check (if not completed during search)
 - Direct Deposit form
 - Health care and other benefits enrollment form
 - I-9
 - W4
 - Worker's Comp Forms
 - Housing allowance declaration
- Order Business Cards
- Set up in the payroll system
- Update organizational chart and staff roster
- Stock office with favorite snacks
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IT and Facilities (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Prepare office
- Purchase computer
- Ensure that the computer has appropriate programs and access to office systems
- Create email address
- Set up phone extension
- Create user accounts on appropriate programs (church management system, etc)
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ONBOARDING NOTES

ONBOARDING NOTES

Supervisor (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Begin to regularly check in and build anticipation for their arrival
- Create an itinerary for the first day and the first week on the job
- Designate someone who can answer questions about moving into the new community (someone who can recommend service providers, gyms, restaurants, doctors, etc)
- Send a thank you note to the spouse and family
- Arrange a welcome team to meet the moving truck and help the family settle into their new home
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PHASE 2: DAY ONE

HR (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Complete remaining new hire paperwork
- Give a copy of the employee handbook
- Give a tour of the building
- Familiarize with reimbursement procedures
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IT/Facilities (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Check in to make sure that the computer is working
- Check to make sure the office is appropriately stocked
- Familiarize new teammate with IT systems
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Supervisor (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Host an informal welcome reception for the entire staff team
- Schedule a welcome lunch with your new teammate's family
- Introduce new staff member to the rest of the team
- Schedule check-in conversations for the first two weeks
- Give church t-shirts and other swag
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PHASE 3: WEEK ONE

HR (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Daily check-in to help ensure that they are settling in
- Schedule 30, 60, and 90-day follow-up conversations to monitor the transition process
- Introduce benefits plan
- Review HR policies and procedures
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IT/Facilities (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Update website information
- Take photo for website
- Review IT policies
- Help personalize their office space (special furniture, hanging pictures on the wall, etc)
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Supervisor (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Review 30, 60, and 90-day goals
- Schedule 30, 60, and 90-day reviews
- Develop regular meeting rhythms
- Review job responsibilities and priorities
- Ensure that the family is transitioning smoothly
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PHASE 4: THE FIRST 90

Supervisor (Owner: _____, Due Date: _____)

- Conduct a 30-day review
- Conduct a 60-day review
- Conduct a 90-day review
- Find ways to incorporate new staffer and their family into the life of the church
- Follow through on a regular rhythm of coaching
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