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Virtual Onboardings that Employees Rave About

OCTOBER 2021

Why We Need Better Virtual Onboarding

Since 2005, the number of people working remotely has increased by more than 159%. Those workforce changes combined with new technology have rapidly changed the onboarding process for companies.

Whether remote, hybrid or in-person, workforces of all styles are adopting digital approaches to onboarding. Yet virtual onboardings also come with challenges. Consider some statistics:

- The average sales reps' tenure is 18 months.[1]
- It takes an average of 6 months to fill open positions and costs 150–200% of a reps salary to replace them.[2]
- **20% of employee turnover takes place in the first 45 days.[3]**

These stats prove that onboardings and first impressions matter. So how can you be more proactive in preventing new hire churn?

1 & 2 Xactly – Sales Turnover Statistics You Need to Know
3 – ExactHire – Employee Onboarding

Common Virtual Onboarding Challenges

- **Passive:** Most of the time new employees are forced to simply show up and watch. There are few opportunities to build meaningful connections, and the onboarding manager is more concerned with checking off items on the onboarding checklist.

- **Disorganized:** Starting a new job is overwhelming enough. Imagine having to search for instructions, links and documents that are scattered between emails, Learning Management Systems and calendar invites. Having to locate and keep track of content adds an extra layer of stress to the first days.

- **Forgettable:** After onboarding, the difficulty continues. There is rarely a persistent hub or place to come back to review materials. Team members are left feeling isolated, uninspired and generally unprepared for next steps and progression.

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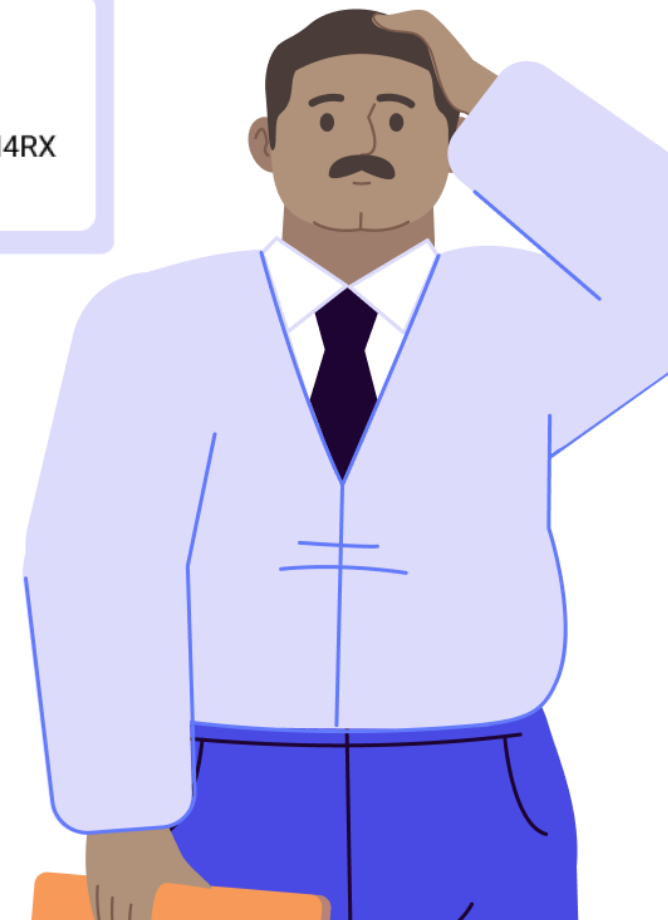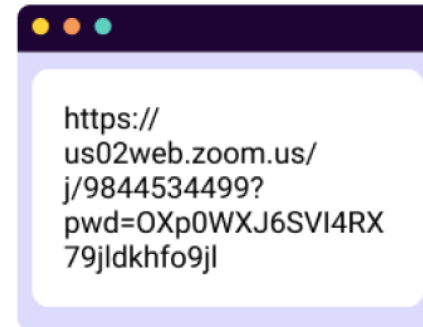
10 Ways to Create Virtual Onboardings that Employees Rave About

At Filo, we believe onboardings should:

- **Inspire** with your brand, mission and culture.
- **Align** on what you do, how you do it, who you do it for and why it is needed.
- **Enable** new hires to get their hands dirty by doing, practicing and receiving feedback.
- **Connect** with organizational leaders and new peers to establish relationships.

Providing virtual onboarding experiences that are not only organized and efficient, but that your *employees love* is paramount. This guide includes 10 Ways to Create Virtual Onboardings that Employees Rave About:

1. Focus on the Live Onboarding Experience
2. Create a Resource Hub
3. Walk the Walk of Onboarding
4. Create a Sense of Belonging
5. Showcase Your Company Culture
6. Connect Team Members
7. Provide a Unique and Tailored Experience
8. Facilitate Engagement
9. Prepare Your Internal Team
10. Assign Thoughtful Pre-Work

Focus on the Live Onboarding Experience

As the work styles adapt, we're seeing onboardings following suit. We see a few methods of virtual onboardings:

- **Live onboarding** (the meetings, or synchronous portions of your onboarding experience)
- **Asynchronous training** (learning or training that happens async, like watching a training video on an LMS)
- **Blended onboarding approaches** (a combination of live and async content)

Carly Lehner, the Head of RevOps & Enablement at Andela, talks about the blended approach she uses to onboard and train new hires.

"I generally like to use the "Flipped Classroom" approach, which means that the learner will learn the information and concepts using eLearning, and then get together live with their fellow new hires and a facilitator (Enablement, Manager, or a Peer) to discuss and debrief. This approach means that the discussion in the live sessions is much more meaningful and it helps the new hire process what they've learned and ask questions."

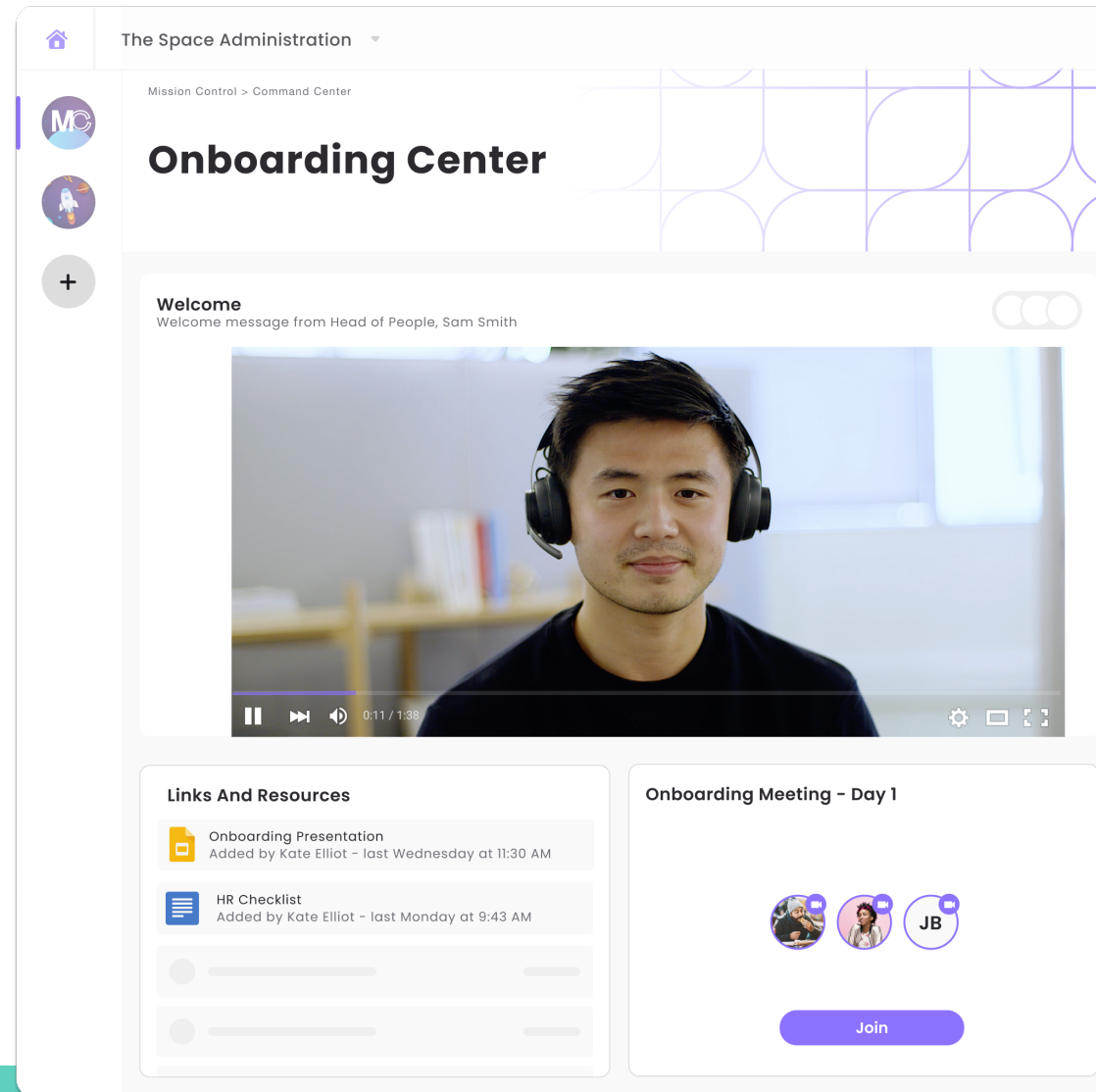**Carly Lehner**
Head of RevOps & Enablement
Andela

When it comes to hybrid and blended approaches, the live or digital elements often take a backseat. So much effort is put into async training, synchronous collaboration and live experience usually consist of only a Zoom link. What about the human interaction components?

Create a Resource Hub

Create a process, with supporting software, that eases new hires into their jobs. This can be accomplished by a branded virtual space or hub that includes docs, access to Zoom meetings, videos and training materials. Having one centralized hub makes it less complicated and time consuming to track down needed documents and links.

The hub should also have a "get to know us" area which would include a breakdown of company leaders with information on them and other team members.

This resource hub makes new hires feel part of the company's culture by giving them a central location to interact with others. Once onboarding is complete, this becomes an asset for everyone to refer back to as needed.

The Space Administration

Mission Control > Command Center

Onboarding Center

Welcome
Welcome message from Head of People, Sam Smith

0:11 / 1:38

Links And Resources

Onboarding Presentation
Added by Kate Elliot - last Wednesday at 11:30 AM

HR Checklist
Added by Kate Elliot - last Monday at 9:43 AM

Onboarding Meeting - Day 1

JB

Join

Walk the Walk of Onboarding

To fully understand how to improve onboarding, go through it yourself. Adriana Romero, Director of Enablement Solutions at LevelJump.io, speaks on this approach.

To understand the onboarding process when starting in a new enablement role, she went through the entire onboarding cycle. Adriana still employs this cross-functional training/onboarding with sales teams.

"For the first 30 days everyone is a BDR. Whether you are an AE, Sales Enablement, or Customer Success, you go through the same onboarding and experience that BDRs do. It's the hardest role, so this really helps build empathy. We also never know when we may need to flex those muscles, so it's a good skill to have. Finally, for the Enablement team, you can see any gaps in onboarding when you go through it yourself."

Adriana Romero
Director Enablement Solutions
LevelJump.io

Create a Sense of Belonging

There is anxiety around where to be on your first day, in a physical office or virtually. It's important that a new employee has a place to land on their first day. This sense of place should be formed from your onboarding hub. This becomes a place to form connection and comfort.

Another way to make people feel they belong is through company swag. Branded items not only allows for everyone to feel connected but also shows their pride for being a member of the company's team. Consider suggesting that folks wear their branded company t-shirt on the first day.

"We really like to send welcome boxes that say "Hey congrats on the first day. Here's the swag and pens.' It really makes a newcomer feel welcome," says Randi Doerr, VP of Client Success at ExactHire.

Showcase Your Company Culture

If you want new hires to embrace the company's mission, vision and values fully, you have to give them examples. There's no better time to communicate and display this than during the employee onboarding process.

Here are a few examples on how company culture can be showcased during onboarding:

- Have a tenured employee speak about why they joined the company.
- Provide employee handbooks and any other collateral that explains your culture in the resource hub
- Have the CEO record a motivational speech, if not available for a live meeting, for all new team members.
- Discuss your company's successes and failures, and the lessons learned from each other

JoDee Curtis, owner of Purple Ink LLC, an HR consulting firm, discusses how she is encouraging HR professionals to show how important onboarding and culture is in reducing churn.

"I think now more important than ever with this 'great resignation' and 'turnover tsunami' it's important that I reinforce to HR and hiring managers that onboarding is really important. You have to be open and honest and that's not all about sharing the good things about work. Along with talking about the company culture, it is also major to set clear expectations."

JoDee Curtis
Owner
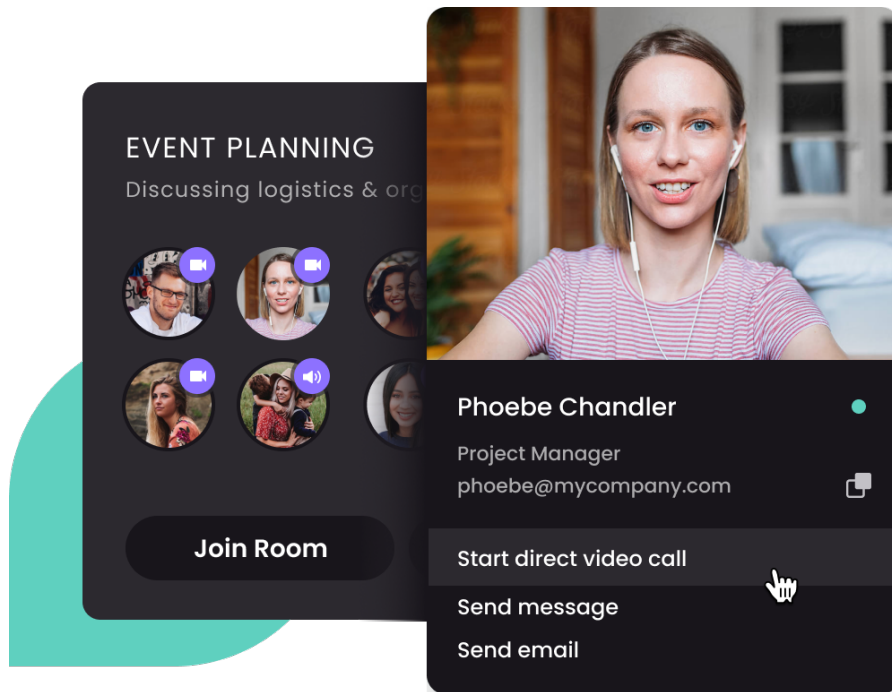Purple Ink LLC

Connect Team Members

One of the major components of in-person onboarding is getting to know the team. Those interpersonal moments are critical; however, they are easy to get overlooked in virtual onboarding experiences.

Don't assume simple 'meet and greet' chats will happen on their own, and don't leave this crucial engagement to happen asynchronously in chats. In physical offices, it's natural to spin up a conversation in the breakroom but this may take more dedicated facilitation virtually. You can help by scheduling purposeful introductions with other employees, like top executives and management.

"It seems like such a simple thing but I think we're looking for more opportunities to have one-on-one time with people. The small group time where you can really listen to someone. I have to seek out this time myself...I'm talking to them but I'm talking to them about work. I have to look for opportunities to break for more conversational times like 'hey, how are your kids?'"
JoDee Curtis
Owner at Purple Ink LLC

EVENT PLANNING
Discussing logistics & org

Join Room

Phoebe Chandler
Project Manager
phoebe@mycompany.com

Start direct video call
Send message
Send email

Onboarding companions or "buddies" can act as a mentor for new hires throughout the onboarding process (and beyond). Let new hires know buddies are there to help answer questions they may feel shy about asking in a larger group setting.

"All new hires are assigned a mentor when they start, like a buddy system. Our mentors are crucial to our new hires' success! They start working on the onboarding tasks and at the same time, they start observing and shadowing accounts with their mentor. As time progresses, They start to work on tasks for the accounts they are assigned to. Eventually, they get to a point where they're actually doing the work and their mentors are there as an extra resource." –Jennifer Reyes, Sales Enablement Manager at Blend

"It's really about talking to them; about having a buddy or having somebody who is truly responsible for the dissemination of soft information. It's not always the highest person on the team. Sometimes it just happens to be the person on the team who has the highest empathy score or who has the highest social outgoingness." –Randi Doerr, Vice President of Client Success at ExactHire

Provide a Unique and Tailored Experience

Hiring in cohorts is very common to hire faster and streamline the onboarding process. There are things that everyone joining a company needs to know; however, the experience should be tailored for the individual. Consider pre-scheduling meetings in advance for onboarding health checks.

The more new hires feel heard and seen as an individual, the higher the likelihood they become a dedicated employee.

"All new hires start out with a 30/60/90-day plan that will differ depending on their role. I take every employee's experience and schedule into account, so I will personalize the onboarding based on varying factors. For example, I have folks that have already come from our industry so I will fast track them versus someone that's coming in fresh. "

Jennifer Reyes
Sales Enablement Manager
Blend

Facilitate Engagement

The onboarding sessions should be engaging for all involved. Having an entertainment factor makes it worthwhile and meaningful. This all comes down to the **right content**, and how you present that content.

"To make things engaging, we have them do scavenger hunts and play Kahoot games on Zoom. At the end of their onboarding, we celebrate with a graduation pizza party. We try to do as many fun activities as we can. "
 – Jennifer Reyes, Sales Enablement Manager at Blend

Building in space for socialization goes a long way with engaging everyone involved. At the beginning of live meetings, start out with an ice-breaker (e.g. have everyone share a new TV show they are watching). It's important to show that you care about the team as people and don't want to solely talk about work.

Other than having fun together, another way to engage meaningfully with a new team member is by asking them questions. This provides a feedback safe environment. A safe environment is built with trust and it's essential to build trust early in the new team member's journey.

Demo Practice 1

Join

Demo Practice 2

Join Room
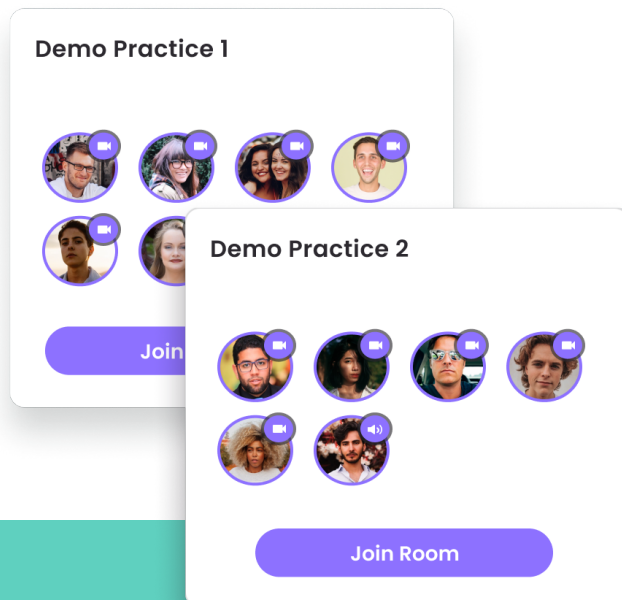
Prepare Your Internal Team

Prior to when onboarding starts, ensure that employees have:

- Access to appropriate HR paperwork
- Email address is activated
- Job responsibilities are clearly defined

But most importantly, whose responsibility is it to make sure that all of these tasks are scheduled and completed?

Being prepared is also important for any current employees that will play a role in the onboarding process. Prep your current employees with how they should engage. Are they responsible for a training session? Are they assigned an onboarding buddy?

Randi Doerr, the Vice President of Client Success at ExactHire, spoke about the importance of preparation and equipping teams with what they need to succeed.

"Several weeks in, it's important to make sure people understand what their budget is. Can they send flowers? Do they have stamps to send cards? Do they even have cards to send? We are seeing people think through those things more. You have to equip people with those things on the frontend in the virtual world."

Randi Doerr
Vice President of Client Success
ExactHire

Assign Thoughtful Pre-Work

Pre-work not only ensures that things go according to schedule, but also gives time to focus on the company's mission and culture during live sessions.

Give a rundown of company communication tools. Don't assume that your team member is familiar with what your company uses, even if they are popular. For example, one simple pre-work assignment may be asking the employee to fill out their Slack profile and join relevant channels. Or it may include resending the job description and doing some background reading on the company.

"Starting a new job is exciting but also nerve wracking. Send a welcome email with all the information a new hire needs to be successful on their first day. I like to include an overview of the various tech tools that are used at Andela and what they are used for. We can't assume everyone has used Slack in previous organizations, or a Single Sign On platform. A brief overview helps them understand what the tools are used for and who to go to for help."

Carly Lehner
Head of RevOps & Enablement
Andela

Filo.co

Virtual onboardings that drive real impact.

Take a Tour

From onboardings to QBRs, kickoffs, and deal reviews, Filo brings distributed revenue teams together.

📉 Reduce Ramp times

🌟 Streamline Onboardings & Trainings

🙌 Boost Energy & Improve Retention

🤝 Close Deals Faster

Acme Corporation ▾

Mission Control > Command Center

Onboarding Center

👥 People 💬 Room Cha

Welcome
Welcome message from Head of People, Sam Smith

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Marvin McKinney
Hey all - so glad to be starting today and you all! 👏👏

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