

# RECRUITMENT HANDBOOK

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A guide to hiring  
and onboarding



2024

The RDN Recruitment Handbook was produced by the Regional Development Network to support member organizations who work together for the socio-economic development of English-speaking communities throughout Québec.

Unless otherwise stated, information in this document has been adapted from HR Intervals—an online knowledge base to help nonprofit managers, employees, and board members better understand, address, and guide people management within their organizations.

[www.hrintervals.ca](http://www.hrintervals.ca)

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# INTRODUCTION

**The most effective way to ensure the success of your organization is to hire the right people and train them properly.**

Your hiring methods constitute an employee's first impression of your organization and will contribute to how they feel about it over the long term.

In this handbook, we'll take you through steps to develop a clear process so that hiring your next employee is less stressful for all concerned. We have also included templates that can be easily adapted to your needs. Digital versions can be found on the RDN Member Portal.

## Prepare

Conduct a job analysis to determine what is needed in the position.

Create a new job description or modify an existing one and have it approved.

Develop a job posting.

## Recruit

Choose your recruitment methods.

Screen the resumes that have been submitted.

## Interview

Choose a selection committee.

Conduct any testing if necessary.

Develop or review interview questions.

Perform reference checks.

Perform an in-person or virtual interview.

## Hire

Negotiate and sign the letter of engagement.

Inform final candidates of the decision.

## Onboard

Develop or update the onboarding process.

Provide ongoing support to the new employee.



### TIP

*A job opening or the need for a new position is a good opportunity to revisit your organizational chart, to examine the overall structure of your organization, and to assess the people already in place to make sure your organization's needs are being met.*

# STEP 1: CONDUCT A JOB ANALYSIS

A job analysis is a process for collecting information to help you fully understand and describe the duties and responsibilities of a position, as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to do the job. This information will be used to develop an accurate job description and is also essential for setting the salary scale for the position.

A job analysis is usually conducted when an organization's job descriptions are missing or out of date. Many organizations conduct job analysis activities on an annual basis. The typical kinds of information you can gather are:

Supervisory responsibilities

Experience

Educational requirements

Competencies and behaviours

Special qualifications

Summary of duties

Frequency of supervision

Authority for decision-making

Essential contacts for the incumbent

Responsibility for records/reports/files

Working conditions

Physical and mental demands of the job

You need to ensure that the information collected is accurate and can be confirmed from several sources. It's also best to survey more than one employee to establish a valid baseline for tasks or responsibilities you're trying to better understand. You can use techniques such as:

## Job analysis interviews

With this technique, you ask the employee currently in the role a series of questions about the job. Include questions about its main tasks, the desired impact, and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and equipment required to perform well in the job.

## Job analysis questionnaires

Questionnaires contain a carefully selected set of questions that are shared with job holders and managers to complete.

## Job analysis activity logs

The employee is asked to keep a log of every activity and the time spent on it for a set timeframe. By routinely recording these details, you can determine how many jobs to create or how work needs to be arranged within a job.

# Job analysis questionnaire

## Job purpose

1. What is the primary purpose of this job?  
Describe in a few sentences.  
.....

## Duties and responsibilities

2. List the main duties and responsibilities of this job.  
.....
3. How do these duties contribute to organizational goals?  
.....

## Skills and qualifications

4. What specific skills and qualifications are required for this job? Include educational and technical skills, certifications, etc.  
.....
5. Are there any preferred skills or qualifications that are not mandatory but beneficial?  
.....

## Work environment and conditions

6. Describe the work environment (office, outdoors, varying locations, etc.).  
.....
7. Are there any physical demands or unusual working conditions associated with this job (e.g., lifting heavy objects)?  
.....

## Performance criteria

8. What are the key performance indicators for this job?  
.....
9. How is success measured in this role?  
.....

## Decision-making and autonomy

10. What level of decision-making authority does this job have?  
.....
11. Can you provide examples of typical decisions made by someone in this role?  
.....

## Interpersonal and communication skills

12. What level of interaction does this job have with other departments, clients, or external parties?  
.....
13. Describe the communication skills required for this job.  
.....

## Challenges and problem-solving

14. What are the most common challenges faced in this job?  
.....
15. Describe a typical problem someone in this role might have to solve.  
.....

## Training and development

16. What type of initial training is required for this job?  
.....
17. What are the opportunities for professional development or advancement within this role?  
.....

## STEP 2: DEVELOP A JOB DESCRIPTION

Job descriptions can help increase individual and organizational effectiveness by describing the tasks, duties, and responsibilities that an employee will work on.



A job description can be viewed in two parts. First, the description of duties (what needs to get done) and second, the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other factors required to do the job (what it takes to do the job).

Your organization should have a job description approval process. The most common scenarios include:

The board or a sub-committee of the board approves the job description for an executive director.

In small organizations, the executive director approves all staff job descriptions.

As organizations grow, the executive director may delegate job description approval to an appropriate manager or team.

When updating an existing job description, keep in mind that if the description deviates significantly from the original, a new salary evaluation is necessary.

## A typical job description contains:

### 1 Job title

The title of the position and some alternative titles for the same position.

### 2 Reporting relationships

The title that the position reports to and the title of the role(s) that report to it.

### 3 Hours of work

The number and nature of expected work hours. Examples include full-time, part-time, traditional business hours, occasional or frequent evenings and/or weekends, and the length of the position's work term, such as permanent, temporary, or seasonal.

### 4 Job purpose

The job purpose, sometimes called the job statement, is a brief overview of why the job exists and its impact on the organization.

### 5 Primary duties and responsibilities

Examples of the common duties performed by individuals in the position. Some organizations choose to name larger responsibilities that are less likely to change, rather than an extensive list of tasks and duties. While tasks often change, responsibilities are less likely to shift regularly.

### 6 Qualifications

Minimum qualifications are used to ensure that candidates who do not possess the minimum qualifications are not considered for the job. The qualifications described are education, professional designation, knowledge, skills, and abilities, plus other factors such as personal attributes.

### 7 Experience

The number of years and type of required experience to be successful in the position.

### 8 Working conditions

Working conditions explain the context or environment in which employees are expected to accomplish their work. It's important to accurately describe working conditions in your job postings.

### 9 Compensation

Compensation for the position should be stated clearly including the position's wage or salary as per your salary scales, whether as a range or band, and any other direct compensation that the position is eligible for such as bonus pay or overtime pay. Benefits such as vacation, health insurance, pension, and other key employment policies can also be included in the job description.

### 10 Equity clause

All job descriptions should end with an equal opportunity and inclusion clause. This ensures that members of traditionally marginalized communities are encouraged to apply and be considered for these positions.



Visit the RDN Member Portal to view complete job descriptions for the following positions:

Executive Director | Program(s) Manager | Project Coordinator

## STEP 3: CREATE A JOB POSTING

You can think of the job posting as an advertisement. You want to attract the right type of candidate to your organization and provide an accurate and honest view of the position. The job posting draws candidates' attention and interest to the role. It should also encourage candidates to self-assess whether they have the required qualifications and are the right fit for the position.

### JOB DESCRIPTION

Lists duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of the job.

Acts as an internal document used for job evaluation, workflow, and performance management.

### JOB POSTING

Highlights the key responsibilities and qualifications of the job.

Used to recruit externally, promote your employer brand, and explain why applicants should choose to work at your organization over another.

## Key components of a job posting

### 1. Information about the organization

This is a key part of attracting the candidate to the position and is where you help the candidate understand your organization's mission, values, culture, and what it's like to work there. It should include a brief description of the organization and why your organization is a good place to work.

### 2. Information about the role

Here you want to give a sense of what the role entails and provide enough information about the minimum qualifications to allow readers to self-assess whether they meet the position requirements, which will help reduce the number of unsuitable applications. This section should include:

The job title.

The purpose of the position.

A high-level overview of responsibilities.

Whether the role will be leading part of a team or working independently.

The primary work location and travel requirements, if any.

Reporting arrangements, including who the role reports to and any direct reports.

Minimum requirements including experience, qualifications, and skills.

The salary and benefits associated with the position.

### 3. Information about the application process

This section advises candidates:

How to submit their cover letter and resume and who to address it to.

Whether the selected candidate will need to meet any special requirements, such as a clear criminal records check and/or driver's abstract.

When applications are due (the deadline).

Where to get more information about the role and/or the organization.

Your organization's policy about contacting applicants. For example, you may want to advise that only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Your organization's accessibility and equity statement.



Visit the RDN Member Portal to view sample job postings for various positions.

## STEP 4: CHOOSE THE RIGHT RECRUITMENT METHOD

A good recruitment plan includes a mix of recruitment strategies and various communication processes to inform other organizations and relevant communities of the available position. Recruiting for skilled positions is increasingly competitive, meaning nonprofits need to be creative in how they go about attracting the ideal candidate.

Be innovative and consider several different methods to attract the best person for the job. Posting a job ad on Facebook page may feel easier or faster, but it won't bring new or diverse talent into your organization.

### Assess where you are most likely to find your ideal candidates.

Are they already within your organization as current employees or volunteers?  
.....

Will they be recent graduates from colleges or universities?  
.....

Will they come from your employees' networks?  
.....

### Recruitment timelines

The average time to fill a vacancy from posting the job to hiring a successful candidate is two months. To plan your recruitment effectively, consider these typical timelines:

TASK	TIMELINE
Advertise job posting	2 weeks
Repost if there are not a sufficient number of qualified candidates	2 weeks
Screen resumes	1 week
Conduct interviews	1-2 weeks
Conduct candidate testing (if applicable)	1 week
Complete reference checks	1 week
Make job offer to candidate	1-2 days
<b>Total recruitment time</b>	<b>10 weeks or more</b>

Note that currently employed candidates usually give at least two weeks notice to their current employer, depending on their employment agreement. This will add at least another two weeks until your new hire starts.

## External recruitment

There are many options that you can choose from when recruiting externally, each with benefits and drawbacks that you should consider.

### Benefits

### Drawbacks

#### EMPLOYEE REFERRALS

The quality of employee referrals is usually high because employees usually only refer people that they are confident would be a good match for the organization.

The position is more likely to reach qualified candidates that aren't actively looking.

People recruited by employees usually have some understanding of the mission, values, and work of the organization.

Recruitment time and cost are reduced.

There can be a tendency to feel that you must hire someone who is referred by an employee even if you assess that the person is not the best match.

People tend to recommend others with similar backgrounds, and you may end up hiring more of the same type of employees with similar backgrounds and experiences rather than diversifying your workforce.

#### ONLINE JOB BOARDS

Reach a large job-seeking audience.

Provide an easy process to post jobs.

Can be cost effective, if you post on free sites.

Depending on the website, can be costly.

May receive a lot of unqualified applicants.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Encourages candidates already familiar with your organization to apply.

You can make posts creative (e.g., using a video format).

Your organization will need to be active on social media to post jobs.

#### INTERNSHIPS, FIELD PLACEMENTS, AND CO-OP PLACEMENTS

Cost-effective solution for short-term hiring needs.

Provides an opportunity for students or new graduates to gain work experience and discover what it is like to work for your organization.

Students bring a fresh perspective and new ideas.

Opportunity to evaluate a future employee.

University and college career centres help to make the recruitment process efficient and less time-consuming.

The time it takes to train a student or intern in a new job may outweigh the benefits of a short-term placement.

Lack of continuity and potential loss of historical information as co-op placements typically move on after four months.

Greater supervision will be required as they are new to the workforce with limited exposure to professional environments.

## Benefits

## Drawbacks

### RECRUITMENT AGENCIES AND/OR EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRMS

Reduce time as the firm will do most of the preparation for the posting and the preliminary screening.

Can reach a broad range of candidates, including full-time and temporary job seekers.

Enables you to tap into the knowledge, experience, and contacts of an expert.

May be an appropriate recruitment method for the most senior-level positions within your organization.

This is a costly method of recruitment.

A professional recruiter will not have a full understanding of your organization.

The recruiter may be more interested in placing a candidate than finding you the right person for the job.

You will still need to invest time in defining the position and making the final selection of candidates.

### CAREER FAIRS

May be a source of readily available, skilled, and motivated candidates.

Can increase the diversity of your organization.

Can help you connect with a much broader audience.

If focused too heavily on one group or source, you may decrease diversity.

### NETWORKING

Candidates reached through an existing network may have some prior knowledge of the organization or the sector.

Networking can have many benefits such as volunteer recruitment, increased awareness, and visibility in the community.

Relying solely on this method might decrease the diversity of your organization.

### YOUR WEBSITE

Cost effective.

Will encourage candidates interested in your organization to apply.

Provides legitimacy to your online posting.

If this is the only recruitment method you choose, you may receive very few resumes.

### Internal recruitment

Internal recruitment allows existing employees and volunteers to apply for job openings and is linked to succession planning and career development. It can include promotions to a higher-level position and lateral moves to a same-level position. It's imperative to be fair and consistent in how you recruit internally to keep the process positive.

#### *Potential benefits of this approach*

Management already has a good idea of the employee's capabilities.

Rewards the employee/volunteer for past performance.

Gives the employee/volunteer an opportunity for career development.

Retains the organization's investment in the employee/volunteer.

Reduces the amount of time necessary to onboard the person to the new position.

### **Potential drawbacks of this approach**

If used in isolation, it provides a limited number of people to select from.

Reduces the opportunity for increasing diversity within your organization.

Employees that apply for the position and are not selected may be discouraged or disengaged.

Reduces the time and costs of recruitment.

Supports positive morale and retention.

As a courtesy, interviews may be offered to internal candidates who may not meet all qualifications and will probably not be chosen. In lieu of a "courtesy interview," have a frank conversation with the employee to discuss why they may not be ready for the job and explain the competencies you are looking for.

## **Recruitment resources**

### **Job boards and websites**

There are hundreds of job boards and websites where you can post your listings. The amount you pay for these job postings would depend upon the pricing plan you opt for. Some charge a flat rate, while others charge per click. Here are some of the best places to post:

**Québec emploi** is the online employment website of the gouvernement du Québec. It allows registered organizations to post a job offer, easily manage the recruitment process with intelligent matchmaking, and search for candidate profiles using precise selection criteria.

**Job Bank Canada** is the job board provided by the Government of Canada. It allows you to post a job for free for 30 days at a time.

**CareerBuilder Canada** offers what most job sites do but states that their career trends database can help narrow searches for the right candidate. Posting one job for 30 days using the standard layout could cost upwards of \$500 CAD.

**LinkedIn** allows both free and promoted postings. By opting for promoting job listings, employers get three times more qualified applicants because of the broader reach and priority display for job searches.

**Indeed** boasts a unique monthly visitor count of 250 million. It is primarily a job post aggregator that displays job listings from job boards, agency sites, and company career sites.

**Monster** is a generic, non-specialized job website offering free as well as per-listing plans. For a one-time job posting requirement, listing costs are calculated on the average daily budget spent starting at \$15 CAD per day.

### **Carrefour jeunesse-emploi**

CJEs are community organizations with a mandate is to assist young adults aged 15 to 35 by helping them find employment, return to school, or start a small business. Employers can share job postings and organize recruitment activities with the CJE.

## Place aux jeunes en région

Place aux jeunes en région aims to attract and retain young adults in rural areas of Québec by offering personalized support and assistance in finding employment, securing housing, and integrating into the community. Employers can share their postings and have access to 74,000 potential candidates aged 18-35.

## Recruitment organizations and programs

Various recruitment organizations and programs exist in all regions. The needs and priorities of each region may influence the existence, development, and implementation of local initiatives tailored to address unique challenges and opportunities.



*For a list of these, please visit the RDN Member Portal.*

# STEP 5: START THE SELECTION PROCESS

Once you have developed your recruitment plan and have recruited interested candidates, you can begin the selection process. While all organizations develop their own process, below is a general framework for selection.

Review applications for minimum qualifications.

Develop an interview short list.

Conduct interviews.

Assess each candidate against selection criteria.

Perform reference checks for your final candidates.

Make your hiring decision and employment offer.

Complete the necessary paperwork.

Here are some things to look for when reviewing candidate applications and selecting your short list:

Is the resume professional and well-formatted?  
Are there spelling mistakes?

Does the applicant have the education, qualifications, and experience required to perform the job?

Did the candidate take the time to include a tailored cover letter?

Are there any gaps in employment?

Has the candidate changed jobs frequently?

# STEP 6: PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW

## Select an interview panel

Engaging other people in a selection process can be beneficial. You may want to include a senior staff member or a board member. When you invite panel members to take part, let them know how much time it will take and their role. Their contributions can include:

Preparing interview questions.

Providing input about the final selection.

Participating and note-taking in interviews.

Assessing each candidate against the selection criteria.

When working with a selection panel:

Give panel members copies of the candidates' resumes; a copy of their phone screen answers, if applicable; and any other information the candidate provided.

Share all materials related to the hiring process (announcement and job description, selection criteria, template for assessing candidates, etc.).

Prepare for interviews by clarifying which panel member will ask each question.

Ensure all panel members introduce themselves and share why they are participating in the interview process to help give your candidate context.

## Prepare interview questions

The interview questions that you ask candidates should explore past job performance and cover all essential job functions, skills, and competencies. You should use various approaches to open up conversation topics and/or confirm information. Ask open-ended questions that will require the candidates to provide detailed answers. Also, prepare follow-up questions and probes so that each candidate can elaborate on their answers.

# STEP 7: CONDUCT CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS

Choose an appropriate and private environment for the interviews that will be free from interruption. If you are interviewing internal candidates, consider holding the interviews off-site to maintain the confidentiality of the process.

Interviews should have a consistent structure that includes an opening, your interview questions, an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions, and an explanation of the next steps in the interview process.

In your opening, welcome the candidate and thank them for taking the time to meet with you. Introduce yourself and your role, along with any fellow panel members. Mention the format of the interview, including who will ask questions and how long the interview is intended to take.

## **Assess candidate interviews**

You should develop a rating scale for each interview question to evaluate the answers given by each candidate. Using a consistent rating scale is the most objective way to compare answers between candidates and assess which candidate would do best in the job.

Rating scales typically have four to five rating categories associated with a numerical value. Often, organizations use scores from zero to three for each question/category and total the result.

## **Employment testing**

If applicable, you can use tests to further confirm candidates' skills, knowledge, and abilities. As with interviews, you will need to ensure that the test fairly measures the applicants' ability to do the job and the test must be the same for all candidates that make it to this stage.

You can create your own tests like an MS Office suite test for admin positions, a numeracy test for finance roles, a priority test based on a set of job-specific tasks, or a short-essay assignment to assess a candidates' writing ability.

## Sample interview grid—project coordinator

QUESTION	RATING (out of 3)
1 What do you know about our organization?	
2 Can you describe some of the challenges that the English-speaking community in our region faces?	
3 Describe some qualifications and/or experience you possess for this role.	
4 What are the most important qualities required to be a successful project coordinator?	
5 How will you plan for this project if hired? What are the basic steps you would take?	
6 What do you consider would be the biggest challenge you'll face in this position?	
7 Tell us about a time when you had a conflict with a co-worker. How did you deal with it?	
8 Provide an example of when you had to make a critical decision in your supervisor's absence.	
9 Describe a situation where you needed to persuade someone to see things your way.	
10 How does this project coordinator position fit into your long-term career goals?	
11 What would you do if an important client or partner asked you a question that you did not know the answer to?	
12 How would you deal with a dissatisfied community member or partner?	
13 You have been working with a colleague who has not been performing well recently. How would you handle this situation?	
14 What would you do if you worked hard on a task, and your manager told you that priorities have changed and you must start over from scratch?	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>/42</b>

# STEP 8: CHECK REFERENCES

Checking references carefully and thoroughly is one way to avoid hiring the wrong person. You may have two or more candidates who have successfully passed the interview process, and you may wish to use the reference process to help you decide between them.

Reference checks are a last opportunity to verify the information the candidate has provided, confirm their suitability, and explore any areas of concern. Talk to references before you make an offer.

It may seem easier to accept letters of recommendation that address a candidate's abilities and experience. However, talking to people will allow you to probe issues deeply enough to get a fuller sense of the candidate's values, nature, approach to work, and how they interact with others.

Potential candidates should provide the following information in writing concerning the references they give:

**Name**

**Title**

**Organization they currently work for**

**Telephone number**

**Email address**

**Relation to the candidate**

Speaking to references over the phone is the best way to get more depth about the candidate's character and background.

At the beginning of your conversation with the reference, explain the importance of the position to them and tell them you appreciate their honesty.

Ask about the information on the candidate's resume and the topics discussed during the interview.

Ask for insights into the candidate's character, examples of relevant work, and areas needing development.

Thank them for their help and the time they have spent with you at the end of the conversation.

You should speak with at least two or three professional references of your selected candidate. Speaking with at least one current or previous supervisor is also suggested.

The following sample questionnaire presents the types of information you might seek from references about potential job candidates. You will want to identify areas and abilities that are critical to the position that you are trying to staff. Remember to keep notes of the conversation.

## Questions for reference checks

QUESTION	NOTES
How long have you known (name)?	
What was your relationship with them?	
When did you work with them and for how long?	
What were (name)'s responsibilities at your organization? What type of projects were they involved with?	
How did they contribute to the projects?	
How did they interact with co-workers?	
Can you give an example of their ability to take initiative? Can you provide an example of a time that they were required to use strategic thinking skills?	
What are three of their strengths?	
In what areas do you feel they may need further development?	
Please rank, on a scale of one to ten, the following abilities:	
Writing skills	/10
Verbal presentations	/10
Professionalism	/10
Ability to work with others	/10
Leadership qualities	/10
Ability to work under pressure or respond to competing deadlines	/10
Conflict resolution skills	/10
Why did they leave your organization?	
If you had the option, would you hire them again? Is there anything else we should know before we make a hiring decision?	

# STEP 9: MAKE YOUR HIRING DECISION AND EMPLOYMENT OFFER

**Evaluate final candidates against each other after you have rated them against the criteria.**

Review all your notes and write up your decision.

Make sure your decision is non-discriminatory, complies with provincial and federal laws, as well as your hiring policies, and is based on sound judgment.

Take notes during the interview process and maintain copies of tests to help justify your decision, if needed.

Discuss the decision with colleagues or others who took part in the interviews and/or other stages of the hiring process.

Keep all your recruitment and selection materials on file for at least six months.

Call the candidate to make an offer. When making the verbal offer of employment, be sure to include (as applicable):

- Start date and end date (if a contract)
- Salary
- Benefits
- Pension
- Vacation entitlement
- Probationary period

## Prepare a letter of engagement

The employment agreement will outline all the terms and conditions of employment. The following sections should be included:

**Term of employment:** either permanent, indefinite, or fixed term with an end date

**Position title** and the **position the employee** will report to

**Probation period:** typically three to six months

**Compensation:** annual salary or hourly rate

**Benefits:** group health benefits eligibility date

**Pension:** Pension type (defined or contribution) and eligibility date

**Vacation:** how many weeks entitlement per year

On the next page, you will find a template that can be adapted to your organization and used when hiring new staff. The contents of this template follow Québec's Labour Standards Act and are meant to be a starting point for the creation of a letter of engagement.

## Sample letter of engagement

### Date of employment

If there is a firm end date, add it.

Dear [new hire name],

It is with great pleasure that we confirm your successful candidature for the position of [name of position] at [company name]. Your start date will be [September 12, 2024].

### Position title

Reporting to the [supervisor], the [name of position] is expected to exercise the tasks and responsibilities as outlined in the job description found attached to this document, as well as the objectives and actions in the organization's strategic plan and action plan.

### Probationary period

and evaluation as per your policy.

The first three months of the contract shall constitute the probationary period and is subject to a formal review process. Following the successful completion of the probationary period, a yearly performance assessment will be carried out by the [executive director or executive committee].

### Working conditions

as per your policy for regular working hours and place of work.

Your regular work week consists of [35] hours per week. Given the nature of the work required to perform the tasks and responsibilities, you will occasionally be required to work evenings and/or weekends for meetings or special events. These hours may be compensated by [taking time off during regular office hours].

Your principal place of work will be at the [organization name] office in [city], located at [address].

### Remuneration

Confirm agreed upon salary.

Your salary is [\$52,015.60] per year, calculated at [\$28.58] per hour, [35] hours per week. Salary increases are based on positive performance evaluations and the availability of funding.

### Fringe benefits

Outline any benefits.

Participation in the organization's [group insurance plan, including life, health, and dental coverage, will begin following the standard probationary period. The cost of the insurance is shared 50% by the employee, 50% by the organization].

**Vacation** and authorized time off.

You are entitled to [3] weeks of paid vacation during your first year in this position.

On behalf of the board of directors, we congratulate you and look forward to working together.

Acceptance:

I hereby agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this letter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[New hire name]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Executive director name]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# STEP 10: CANDIDATE REJECTION

## Rejecting external candidates

Once your selected candidate has signed their letter of engagement, you can inform unsuccessful external candidates that were interviewed of the outcome of the recruitment process. Sending external candidates a notification via email is appropriate.

Dear [candidate name],

I would like to thank you for taking the time to interview for the position of [Position Title] with our organization. We enjoyed meeting with you and learning about your experience and qualifications. However, we have decided to move forward with another candidate whose qualifications more closely fit our needs at this time.

We thank you for your interest in [organization name] and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Sincerely,  
[Your name]

## Rejecting internal candidates

It's important to provide internal candidates with timely feedback if they were interviewed and not successful for the job. This should be communicated over the phone or in person. Prior to the conversation, take time to review your interview notes and prepare some constructive feedback points for the employee.

Ensure the feedback you provide is only the information that you received during the interview and based solely on the job criteria.

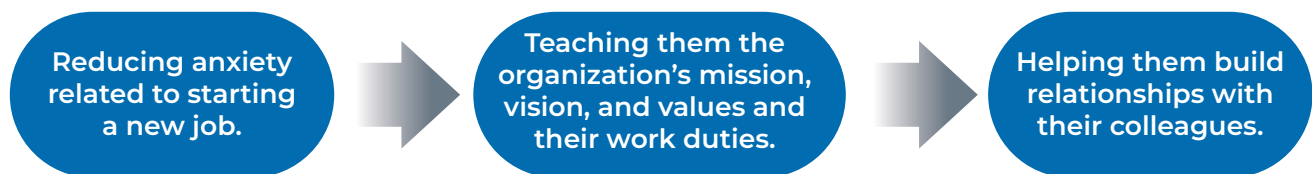
# STEP 11: ONBOARD YOUR NEW EMPLOYEE

Beyond providing information about the organization's policies and procedures, an effective onboarding process should make new employees feel comfortable and help them learn about their role and the organization's culture and values.

Developing and facilitating employee onboarding takes time. Too often, organizations rush through onboarding hoping that new hires will learn as they get to work.

However, by taking the time to onboard new hires properly, employers can increase employees' chances of success, engagement, and retention — saving the organization time and money in the long run.

## A good onboarding process will enable a new employee to be successful by:



### Onboarding best practices

Onboarding is a process that will unfold over time, not just in one day. Therefore, it is important to share enough information for employees to feel equipped and prepared to do their work.

#### DESIGN A PROCESS NOT AN EVENT

Employers should avoid overwhelming new employees with too much information on the first day. An onboarding period supports the intense learning curve that a new employee

will experience. Don't expect an employee to learn and retain everything at once. Instead, ensure they can get answers to questions as their needs change.

#### MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

Many new employees will carry their first-day experiences with them throughout their time with the organization. Consider the experience from the employee's perspective and try to

make it as engaging and simple as possible. By instilling positive emotions from the beginning, the new employee will be inspired to do great work and add value to your organization.

#### DON'T OVERWHELM A NEW EMPLOYEE WITH DOCUMENTATION

Often, the best way to learn about a new workplace is to meet and talk with the people who work there. Rather than asking a new employee to read every policy, procedure,

handbook, and report produced in the past five years, consider making the first few days of work as much about meeting people as getting information.

## MAKE ONBOARDING PERSONAL AND MEANINGFUL

By having open, effective communication, new employees are able to share their preferences and needs. It gives them the opportunity to discuss issues related to inclusion and accommodation.

While there is basic information that all employees need to access, individuals will have different expectations from the onboarding process. Some more experienced employees would appreciate more autonomy while those who are new to the labour market are likely to require more guidance.

## HELP NEW EMPLOYEES UNDERSTAND AND BUILD THEIR INTERNAL NETWORK

To become a fully functioning member of your organization, new employees need to figure out your people, their roles, and how to interact with them. An organizational chart that depicts names, titles, and relationships will help new employees understand their network.

To build their network, consider matching new employees with a peer who can help them navigate their work environment and teams and introduce them to team members they'll collaborate with in the future.

## OFFER INSIGHT ON WORKPLACE CULTURE AND INFORMAL PRACTICES

An onboarding process that only covers policies and procedures just tells a small part of the organization's story. Onboarding should answer questions such as:

- What is this organization all about?
- What is it like to work here?
- How are things organized?
- How does my work contribute to the strategy, mission, and/or vision of your organization?
- What are the organization's strategic objectives?

Think of the formal and informal rules at your workplace. For example:

- What is the office dress code?
- Do you observe a casual Friday?
- How often are staff meetings scheduled?

## MAKE ONBOARDING INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE

New employees should receive an employee handbook that covers the information discussed

during the onboarding process, along with additional key information.

## ASSIGN ALLIES, BUDDIES, AND MENTORS FROM THE START

Once settled in, a new employee may naturally connect with a senior employee or proactively seek a mentor in the workplace. However, it's beneficial to assign a welcome mentor to each new hire to help them navigate the first weeks on the job and get to know the organization's culture.

Similarly, it is helpful to assign a "buddy" to each new employee. This is a good way to involve a co-worker in the process. This person could interact with the new hire on a more informal basis, filling them in on company norms, values, and all the unwritten expectations that are part of the culture. This co-worker can also facilitate introductions around the workplace.

## Onboarding preparation checklist

To ensure a smooth onboarding process, your organization should prepare in advance by completing the following list:

### Communication

- Reach out to the employee ahead of time with a welcoming message.
- Prepare documents for the new employee, such as benefits information, an organizational chart, annual reports, strategic plans, and a contact list.
- Ensure that your employee handbook is up-to-date and that the new employee reviews and signs off on it in a timely fashion.
- Share the onboarding schedule with the new employee, including what will happen on the first day, week, and month.
- Schedule one-on-one meetings with the employee's direct supervisor to discuss the projects assigned and review documentation.
- Create a structured calendar ahead of time, and schedule regular check-ins and touchpoints so the new employee knows what to expect when they start.

### Technology and resources

- Arrange for and equip a workspace with the necessary furniture, equipment, and supplies, and ensure that all equipment is clean and working.
- Set up an email address, phone extension and/or cell phone, prepare business cards (if needed), and arrange an office access card/fob.
- Ship equipment to remote workers before their start date.
- Ensure IT is available to help new hires on their first day.

### People and team

- Advise staff of the new employee's name, position, and start date.
- Send out a notice to board members (and potentially stakeholders and partners) announcing the new employee and their role.
- Add the employee to organizational lists, including telephone, email, and website directories.
- Contact the new employee to confirm details about their first day, including their start time, office location, and the name and contact information of their manager.
- Set up the onboarding team. Confirm who will be doing what in the onboarding process.
- Organize a lunch or after hours get together with the team to get to know everyone in a more casual setting.
- Ask teammates to schedule a meet-and-greet with new hires.
- Select an onboarding buddy to share advice with new hires and help them navigate the organization.

## Onboarding ninety-day checklist

This onboarding process will help you plan your new employee's first 90 days at your organization. It will cover the basics and break them down into small achievable goals and tasks.

A thoughtful onboarding process will set up new hires for success and not overwhelm them. There are essential tasks and interactions that are the basics of onboarding. The following will help new hires understand how to be successful in their roles and how their work contributes to the organization's goals.

### The first day

The first day should be focused on learning about their role and the organization, getting acquainted with the team, and familiarizing themselves with their workspace.

#### ○ **Make introductions to key colleagues on the team.**

#### ○ **Give a tour of the assigned workspace and the rest of the office/facility, including:**

Where to put belongings.

Where to hang coats.

Where to store lunch.

Location of the washrooms.

Location of the fire exits.

Location of the first aid kit(s).

Location of the photocopiers, fax machines, supplies, etc.

#### ○ **Review the role and its responsibilities, including:**

Expected outcomes and/or how success in the role will be measured, such as Key Performance Indicators.

Work to be accomplished in the first days/weeks.

Relevant reports and information needed for the job.

Review schedule information, including start and finish times, lunchtime, and breaks.

#### ○ **Review HR and administration procedures, including:**

Necessary paperwork for pay and benefits.

Probationary period.

Employee policies and procedures manual.

Travel and reimbursement processes.

Absences, leave, vacation, etc.

Telephone and email protocol, internet use policy.

Review health, fire, and safety procedures.

Review diversity, equity, and inclusion and anti-harassment policies and procedures.

## The first week

The rest of the week is for the new employee to ease into the role and absorb all the new information. The focus is to communicate expectations, plan goals together, and set the tone of their time at the organization.

- Connect the new hire with a mentor or onboarding "buddy" and colleagues.
- Review the performance management system and learning and development plans.
- Explain the internal communication processes, including staff meetings.
- Provide an organizational overview, and explain how the job relates to other roles in the organization.
- Identify the key people who will be training the new hire, and schedule those sessions in their calendar.

## The first few months

At this point, new employees should be more comfortable in their roles and with the organization. This is the time you focus on long-term responsibilities and align their performance toward strategic and operational objectives.

- Make team building and employee engagement a priority to ensure new hires don't feel ignored.
- Create opportunities for working relationships to develop and prosper.
- Encourage new hires to set up meetings to discuss their work with you and the team.
- Check in and solicit feedback on their onboarding experience.

# EMPLOYER RESOURCES

## Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST)

The CNESST promotes and ensures compliance with labour rights and obligations in Québec workplaces. They offer online training, webinars, tools, and documentation to enhance employers' knowledge of occupational health and safety, labour standards, and pay equity.

## Services Québec

Services Québec offers a wide range of beneficial programs for employers. Contact a business advisor from the Services Québec office in your region for more information on the services offered to nonprofit and social economy organizations.

The **Subvention Salariale program** aims to integrate individuals into sustainable employment. Employers can receive funding to cover up to 100% of wages.

The **Concertation pour l'emploi program** provides financing to organizations that wish to improve human resources management and processes.

The **Programme de formation de la main-d'œuvre** allows organizations to develop employee skills, to increase efficiency, and to improve the retention of staff. Technical or financial assistance is provided to define training needs, carry out training, and evaluate the effectiveness of the training received.

## HR intervals

HR Intervals is a Canadian online HR toolkit for organizations that don't have an HR department or access to the information and resources they need to perform HR functions as effectively as they would like. It is a comprehensive, bilingual online knowledge base to help nonprofit managers, employees, and board members better understand, address, and guide people management within their organizations.





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