

## 17 Ways to Excite, Ignite, and Inspire your New Hires

One of the great opportunities we have as we seek to build a strong relationship with staff is during new employee orientation. First impressions matter, and in addition to getting to know your new hires, it is their chance to get to know you, too!

The first step is taking an honest look at your orientation schedule. How much time do you have? What is the schedule, and what picture are you presenting about the priorities of your organization? Plan carefully and find the balance between covering topics because of regulations and finding space to discuss the values and mission of your organization.

How long is your orientation? Some organizations start with one day and then continue the rest on the job; others have a full week of orientation with their new cohort. Where do you fit on the timeline? Ask the question, "Is this just the way we have always done it, or is there a better way?" As you put together your orientation, here are some suggestions to include that we have gleaned from organizations around the country.

### Meet their supervisor for lunch

Have the immediate supervisor of each new person attend the orientation and take them to lunch at a nearby restaurant. The only item on the agenda? Get to know your new hire! A chance to get to know one another as people as well as professionals is a great first step in building a strong relationship. While this comes with a price tag, the organization behind it says that starting with this strong connection is more than worth it.

### Meet a self-advocate leader

Have one of your self-advocate leaders come in and talk to them about how important they are to the people they support. It might only take 15 minutes, but it sets an early tone and expectation that the people your organization serves have a role and a voice in their care.

### Find people with natural people skills

Identify staff who are good at getting to know their co-workers and consider them as possible future leaders. Find ways to continue to nurture their growth in the organization.

### Bring in one of your role-model DSPs to speak to the group

Leverage your best performers by bringing them in to talk to their new peers. You can identify several DSPs and rotate them between sessions. This allows new team members to connect with experienced DSPs and have someone to talk with if they have questions or need peer advice. Reassure new employees that it is ok to ask others for help.



**Bring in a family member to talk about the importance of what they do for families**

Identify key family members or guardians to come in and talk about the value that staff bring to their family. Whether it is respite, residential, employment or behavior support, a loved one or guardian can share the role families play and the impact staff have.

**Consider where you place your new people for their first assignment**

Instead of just thinking about coverage, consider assigning new hires with your strongest, most positive staff. Their initial learning will take place on the job with either your best people or the luck of the draw.

**Find a Lifeline**

Build support among new hires by pairing them up and sharing contact information with each other. Encourage them to connect and keep in touch as they move forward in their careers. Share a contact list with everybody (this benefits the new employees as well as gives you a chance to collect their cell phone and email addresses).

**Bring in the CEO and other key leaders in for an informal chat with the new hires**

At Stone Belt in Indiana, the CEO spends 60-90 minutes with each new class talking about what is important to achieve the mission of the organization. She also shares how she started with the organization three decades ago and her journey to being CEO.

**Stay interviews: Think 3-3-3**

Have supervisors conduct 15-minute “stay interviews” with new hires after **3** days, **3** weeks, and **3** months. Address concerns, answer questions, and share ideas to build confidence in the new hire and make the connection with the supervisor stronger.

**Keep an eye on the potential all-stars**

Identify the key people in each class that have the potential to become all-stars. Develop a plan with your leadership to keep in touch with these people, including opportunities to be mentored and promoted.

**Identify the key time that turnover takes place in your organization**

Identify the key shifts and places where turnover is taking place. When do people tend to leave? As these periods approach, get ahead of the timeline to meet with people who work on those shifts. Discuss any concerns, answer questions, and make a game plan for support. Connect and offer positive feedback! Key shifts, timelines, and locations will differ for each organization, so identify a timeline and approach that is best for you.

**Identify if they have any friends among your experienced staff**

If they were referred by one of your existing staff, make sure you take note of that and reach out to them. Some agencies offer financial recognition for current staff who bring in people who stay a full year.

### Include your key players

Your workplace culture includes everybody. Recognize all key players, including department heads, program directors, supervisors and experienced DSP's. Make sure they know how important they are to these new hires. Share a list of new hires among your staff and ask them to be part of their support system. It is an opportunity to not only show them the ropes but make sure your key players know how important they are in influencing new staff.

### After one month, consider a small raise and title bump

After thirty days on the job, one agency gives people a raise of .25 cents an hour and changes their title from DSP to DSP II. This recognizes their work and sends a message that, "We noticed you and the work that you are doing." This is considered when starting the initial salary and planned for everyone who is doing a satisfactory or above job.

### Identify new hires who have a personal connection or family member with a disability

Understanding what is happening in the lives of your new hires is important. If they have a family member with a disability or identify with a disability themselves, it could be a very strong motivator for the individual to grow and develop in your organization. Knowing this and being a resource for them could lead them to getting services from your organization at some point in the future. One organization is offering support meetings for any staff who has a son or daughter with a disability. It has grown to include grandparents as well as siblings as a way to connect with them.

### Celebrate your success

Find a way to celebrate the success of bringing in new people. Acknowledge and celebrate what is going well. Model the most positive behavior of your staff and share their successes.

### And of course, introduce them to Quillo – and get them using the app

There is no better time to connect your new staff to the WHY. Get them started with the **Quillo** app, using orientation as an opportunity to download it. It's your easiest and most efficient way to stay connected from the very beginning, sharing videos from your organization as well as **Quillo**. Building better relationships and better lives starts with you!

To try the Quillo app, contact John at (317) 626-4387  
or [john@myQuillo.com](mailto:john@myQuillo.com).

