# Inclusive Onboarding Practices that Increase Retention

**1. Networking** ~ Increase connections with colleagues in your region

* Form a consortium among regional organizations to partner in onboarding activities
* Create a list of regional professional associations and organizations that new employees may be interested in.
* Host networking activities to welcome and connect new hires within the organization and with members of the community.
* Host regular gatherings over the first 12-24 months for new employees to meet and network among themselves; invite key leaders to attend and network with new employees.

**2. Mentoring**

* Develop a formal mentoring program for all new hires.
* Assign each new employee 2 mentors: one mentor within their department; another mentor from a related department.
* Host a gathering 1-2 times/year for all new hires and their mentors.

**3. Transition to the team level**

* Design team-building activities to fast-track the new hires entry into the department.
* Schedule 1-1 meetings with the executive leader of the division and other divisions.
* Schedule a meeting with the president.
* Schedule “meet and greet” meetings with key colleagues and partners.
* Develop a professional development plan for new hires to ensure they receive critical information about organizational culture, procedures, policies, unwritten rules, etc.

**4. Create a formal process of “Transition Teams” to support the successful transition of new hires**

* Create “Transition Teams” to provide support to new hires over the first 12-24 months of employment.
* Team members to include a cross section of employees from their area and related departments.
* Have the team members plan how they will individually and collectively support their new colleague.
* Hiring Manager meets with the Transition Team to review their plan to support the new hire’s transition.
* Ensure that their office space is ready when they arrive; have the keys, parking pass, ID card, etc., readily available; make sure the computer, phone, etc., are in working order.
* Find out when they intend to arrive on their first day, and plan to have members of the department available to greet them and help them move in, if possible.
* Plan how to get them introduced to all the key department colleagues and other partners.

**5. Supervisors conduct orientation and on-going transition meetings with all new employees to:**

* Review the division/department/organizational inclusion and equity mission and goals.
* State the expectations for infusing equity and inclusion into daily work practices.
* Identify current level of cultural competence and plan professional development activities for the next 12+ months.

**6. Supervisors meet regularly (weekly or bi-weekly) with new employees to explore:**

* How the employee is adjusting and integrating into the department/division
* The employee’s need for additional training, support and coaching
* Any conflicts, misunderstandings or barriers they are encountering
* Any needs for additional resources or information

**7. Website resources**

* Expand the organization’s website to include a section for prospective candidates that includes the Mission, Vision, Values, and any statements about the organization’s commitment to creating an inclusive environment and hiring and retaining employees who demonstrate the cultural competencies and skills to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse populations you serve.
* Include links to information about the region, including the housing market, local schools, religious/spiritual organizations, community organizations, businesses, etc.
* Provide easy links to employment related information, including descriptions of benefits, key human resources policies, professional and career development opportunities, etc.

**8. Create institutional structures that encourage and reward efforts to increase cultural competencies**

* Create the opportunity for employees to participate in a development program to become an “Inclusion Partner.” Participants would develop deeper skills and competencies to track and recognize comments and practices that could undermine the organization’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, as well as practice effective ways to respond and intervene in situations to create greater inclusion and fairness.
* Require all major committees and task forces have at least one “Inclusion Partner.”
* Schedule several programs each year that explore issues of integrating diversity and inclusion into daily practices, such as: panels of employees/supervisors discussing how they infuse issues of diversity and inclusion into their work; speakers and training sessions on the competencies to effectively serve various segments of the student population; roundtables of employees to share promising practices; staff retreats to increase skills/competencies and share best practices; etc.
* Require all staff to participate in a diversity and inclusion training sessions every 1-2 years.
* Infuse issues of equity and inclusion into all training and educational activities, particularly supervisor and management training.
* Add to the annual planning process: Planned strategies to increase the skills and competencies of current staff to serve the increasingly diverse student population; planned strategies to increase the pool of promising candidates for future job openings; planned strategies to increase the retention of current employees, especially those that demonstrate competencies and skills to serve the increasingly diverse student population.

**9. Assess current practices and procedures**

* Gather and analyze climate and organizational data on the past 5+ years
* Gather and diagnose data with an Inclusion Lens on most human resources activities, including - hiring pools; employee satisfaction; professional development opportunities; length of stay of new hires; performance ratings; etc.
* Identify and review/revise practices and procedures for reporting and resolving uninclusive or harassment situations.

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