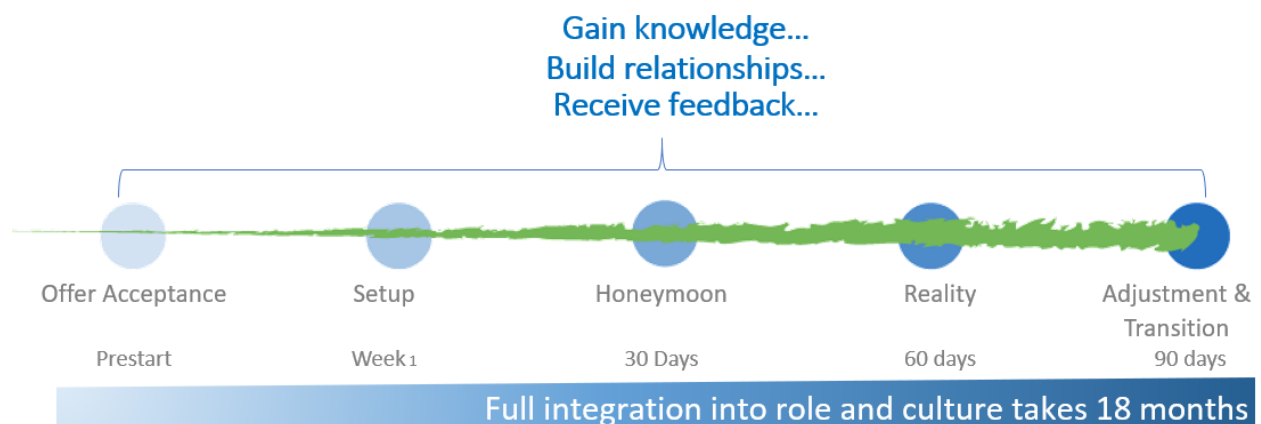*At Connect the Dots Consulting, we are committed to providing practical and timely leadership coaching and development. At a time when leaders are stretched to the limit, we want to share a Toolkit for effective "Work from Home" Leadership. These tried-and-true leadership practices are worth a reminder in these volatile times.*

Onboarding in a Virtual World

Onboarding doesn't have to stop. Leaders may be hiring significantly fewer new employees, but those that are still joining during this challenging time may require an even deeper level of engagement from their stakeholders. Follow this simple plan to make sure your new hires are welcomed, engaged and feel like they made the right decision.

Gain knowledge…
Build relationships…
Receive feedback…

Offer Acceptance	Setup	Honeymoon	Reality	Adjustment & Transition
Prestart	Week 1	30 Days	60 days	90 days

Full integration into role and culture takes 18 months

Onboarding success results from the *partnership* of the new employees, their managers, and their HR business partners.

Not only are leaders challenged with managing their teams remotely in this temporary "new normal" of social distancing and working from home, some may also need to onboard new team members. Leaders who do a little planning and remember the basics of onboarding, can bring new team members into the organization smoothly and successfully.

Before Day One: Getting Ready

- Connect with new hires via email, text, and social media.
- Send relevant information about the organization.
  - Company mission, vision, and values
  - Policies and benefits
  - Examples of your company culture: philanthropic events, holiday celebrations, etc.
- Schedule time to talk to get to know them and see what questions they have.

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Day One: Greet them Face-to-Face

- Use a video platform to "meet."
- Welcome them warmly and ask how they are doing.
- Remind them why you hired them and what you think they will bring to the team.
- Review how logistics will be addressed.
- Communicate the week's meetings and touchpoints.

Week One: Getting Set Up

- Establish a check-in cadence. We suggest daily for a couple of weeks, then at least weekly.
- Introduce the onboarding plan.
- Address outstanding logistical items.
- Ask each team member to send a note or video of welcome.

Month One

- Discuss and review onboarding objectives.
- Establish Early Wins: What can they accomplish in 30-60-90 days?
- Create a plan to build relationships.
- Connect new hire virtually with other parts of the organization. *This is especially important because they are not physically present.*

Months Two through Six

- Have regular onboarding meetings (not just tactical ones) and review progress on Early Wins and onboarding objectives.
- Solicit feedback on the new hire from the team, customers, and cross-functional partners.
- Deliver feedback often. Be specific and remember the 70/30 rule:
  - o 70% of feedback should be positive reinforcement
  - o 30% of feedback should be constructive

  *For more information, see our Toolkit Resource on **Providing Regular Feedback.***
- Don't make assumptions that your new hire is "getting" everything. Ask questions like:
  - o What has surprised you most about our org, the team, your role?
  - o How would you describe what success looks like in your first year?
  - o How can we help you be your best?
- Partner with HR to provide consistent onboarding support. Suggest that other new hires meet and connect as they go through onboarding at the same time.

We would appreciate hearing from you as to the strategies that are working or not working in our virtual workplaces. Please drop us a note, follow us on Linked In and Twitter, or check out our website.

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