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Preparing for a new employee

Guidance for HR and hiring managers to consider before a new employee starts.

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A good onboarding experience is essential to retaining new employees. Preparing to onboard a new employee requires open communication with the new starter and planning within your organisation.

Contact the new employee

As the hiring manager or HR partner, it's a good idea to contact the employee to introduce yourself, explain your role in the agency and provide your contact details in case they have any questions before they start.

The employee's manager should touch base to welcome them to the team, ask how they are tracking with the onboarding process and answer any questions. This is a chance to talk about the team they are joining, to give an overview of current projects, discuss equipment and any workplace adjustments.

New senior executives can learn more about their role in the sector on the [senior executive fundamentals website](#).

Workplace adjustments

It's important to give the new employee the opportunity to ask for a workplace adjustment, regardless of their circumstances.

A [workplace adjustment](#) is a change to a work process, procedure or environment that allows a person to:

- perform to the best of their ability

- work productively
- work in a safe environment
- feel included in the workplace
- increase their engagement and motivation to improve performance.

Adjustments can include workspace modifications, workplace practice adjustments, accessibility requirements and software requirements.

Being inclusive in every stage of the onboarding process will help ensure your organisation is supportive of all employees.

Seek advice from your HR team if you need additional advice accommodating an adjustment, or view guidance for **onboarding a person with disability**.

The **Australian Human Rights Commission** has resources that can help you prevent discrimination and promote diversity in your workplace.

Work location

Provide your new employee with information on their workplace location, including the address, access, transport options, and where they should report to on the first day.

Work delivery format

Clarify with your employee how they will perform their role and the **flexible working options available**. Depending on the type of work, this might be a good time to discuss rostering or start/finish times. Take time to listen to the employee's needs while understanding the needs of your team and organisation to find a solution that works.

Plan the first week

Prepare the tasks or projects the employee can start in their first week. This is also a good opportunity to discuss the new employee's role with your team.

Contact HR and IT to book your employee in for any induction sessions or mandatory training your organisation has and inform the employee.

It's a good idea to make a first day/week induction agenda to send to their personal email the week before their start date.

Arrange a buddy

A good way to welcome a new employee is to pair them with someone in their team before they start. Those best suited usually do similar work to the new employee and should be a supportive, honest and reliable companion.

A buddy is an informal onboarding support relationship which new hires can turn to for questions and concerns they may not wish to ask their manager or other colleagues. A buddy also provides valuable information about the context of your organisation and its culture and helps improve employee satisfaction and productivity.

Arrange equipment

Access to necessary work equipment is vital for employees to be set up for success. Consider whether they will need a laptop, headset, keyboard and mouse, software, user ID, building access, uniform or anything else specific to the role, and arrange for these to be ready on their first day.



Checklist: before a new employee starts

- Contact the employee via phone call, video call or face-to-face, and share your contact details with them in case they have questions
- Discuss any adjustments the employee may need for their workspace, workplace practice, accessibility or software
- Clarify flexible working arrangements such as what format the work will be undertaken in and on what basis
- Organise any required equipment, software or uniforms to be ready for the employee
- Identify what projects or work your employee will be taking on in their first few weeks
- Contact the employee to update them on the onboarding process and answer any questions
- Provide the new employee with information on workplace location, including the address, access, transport options and where they should report to on the first day
- Arrange for someone from your team to volunteer as a buddy and introduce them to your new employee.

[Download the onboarding checklist](#) →