

**BUILD  
EMPIRE**

# Complete guide to onboarding



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# What is employee onboarding?

First things first, what is employee onboarding?

Put simply, employee onboarding is a comprehensive process that integrates new hires into an organisation.

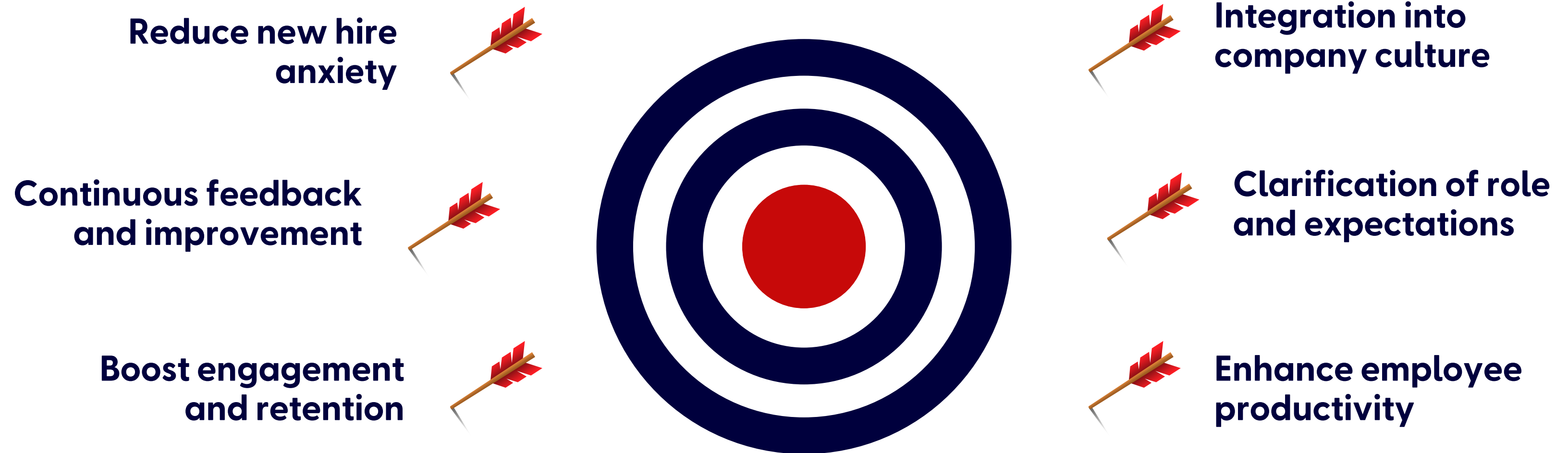
It makes sure your new starters have the tools, knowledge, and support necessary to become productive members of the team.

Onboarding can include initial introductions and orientation sessions to job-specific training and ongoing support.

Effective onboarding not only familiarises employees with company policies, culture, and expectations but also fosters a sense of belonging and engagement.



# What is the goal of onboarding?



# Benefits of onboarding for a business

For businesses, onboarding is a critical process that goes beyond merely introducing new hires to their roles. It sets the tone for the employee's journey within the company and directly impacts their engagement, productivity, and retention.

## ✔ Increased employee retention

Help new hires feel welcome and supported.

Employees who feel connected to the company culture and understand their roles are more likely to stay longer.

## ✔ Improved engagement

Introduce new hires to the company's mission, values, and culture to foster a sense of belonging.

Engaged employees are more motivated and willing to go the extra mile.

## ✔ Faster time to productivity

Provide new employees with the tools, resources, and training to perform their jobs effectively.

This reduces the time it takes for them to reach full productivity.

## ✔ Stronger company culture

Onboarding is an opportunity to immerse new employees in the company culture, which strengthens organisational identity and promotes a unified work environment.

# Benefits of onboarding

## for a business

### ✓ Consistency in training

Ensure that all new employees receive consistent information about the company, its processes, and expectations.

This helps maintain quality and consistency across the organisation.

### ✓ Enhanced employee brand

A positive onboarding experience can enhance the company's reputation as a great place to work, attracting top talent and helping the company stand out in a competitive job market.

### ✓ Reduced costs

Effective onboarding reduces the costs associated with turnover and recruitment.

You can save money in the long run by minimising the need to repeatedly hire and train new employees.

### ✓ Better alignment to company goals

Help new hires understand the company's goals and how their roles contribute to achieving them.

This alignment ensures employees are working towards the same objectives as the business.

# Benefits of onboarding

## for an employee

### ✓ **Clear understanding of role and expectation**

Onboarding helps new employees understand their job responsibilities, performance expectations, and how their work contributes to the overall success of the company.

### ✓ **Familiarity with company culture and values**

Through onboarding, employees learn about the company's culture, values, and norms, which helps them integrate smoothly and feel a sense of belonging.

### ✓ **Access to resources and support**

New hires are provided with the necessary resources, tools, and contacts to perform their job effectively. This support network is crucial for their initial success and confidence.

### ✓ **Reduced anxiety and stress**

Starting a new job can be stressful. Onboarding helps reduce anxiety by providing a structured environment where new hires know what to expect and where to find help.

# Benefits of onboarding

## for an employee

### ✓ Building relationships and teamwork

Onboarding often includes introductions to team members, managers, and other departments, helping new employees build a network that can support them.

### ✓ Increased confidence and job satisfaction

Equip employees with the knowledge and skills they need, boosting their confidence and job satisfaction. This positive start can lead to a more fulfilling career.

### ✓ Opportunities for early feedback

Onboarding often includes initial check-ins and feedback sessions, allowing new employees to understand how they are performing and where they can improve early on.

### ✓ Career development and growth

A good onboarding process introduces employees to potential career paths and opportunities for development and growth, which can encourage long-term career planning.

# Common onboarding mistakes and how to avoid them

An effective onboarding process requires careful planning and attention to detail.

When done right, it can significantly enhance employee engagement and retention, but when mismanaged, it can lead to confusion, disengagement, and high turnover.

Here are some common onboarding mistakes organizations make, along with practical ways to avoid them



# Information overload

One of the most common onboarding mistakes is overwhelming new hires with too much information all at once.

Flooding employees with a barrage of policies, procedures, and expectations within the first few days can lead to confusion and frustration, hindering their ability to retain critical information.

## How to avoid it

- Break down the onboarding process into digestible segments spread over the first few weeks or even months.
- Focus on essential information first, such as company values and job-specific responsibilities, and introduce more complex topics once the employee has settled in.
- Instead of relying solely on meetings, give new hires access to a knowledge base or guide where they can revisit information at their own pace.



# Lack of follow-up

Another common mistake is failing to provide ongoing support after the initial orientation.

Often, new hires are left to navigate their new environment alone after the first few days, which can lead to a lack of clarity, decreased productivity, and even disengagement.

## How to avoid it

- Schedule regular one-on-one meetings between new hires and their managers throughout the first few months. These check-ins allow employees to ask questions, address challenges, and receive feedback on their progress.
- Assign a mentor or a peer buddy who can provide day-to-day guidance, helping new hires acclimate to the company's workflow, culture, and unwritten norms.

# Unclear expectations

A lack of clarity regarding the role and responsibilities is a significant pitfall in onboarding.

New employees may struggle to understand how their tasks fit into the broader company goals, leading to confusion, disengagement, and underperformance.

## How to avoid it

- Provide a clear, structured onboarding plan that outlines short- and long-term goals.
- Set expectations for the first 30, 60, and 90 days, ensuring the employee understands what success looks like at each stage. This gives them a roadmap to follow and helps measure their progress.
- Conduct frequent performance reviews, even informally, to assess how the employee is adapting to their role and offer feedback on areas for improvement.



# Failure to integrate

A significant mistake companies make is neglecting to immerse new hires in the company culture.

Without understanding the company's values, mission, and work style, employees may struggle to feel connected, which can lead to low morale and higher turnover.

## How to avoid it

- Ensure the company's mission, vision, and values are a central part of the onboarding process. Whether through orientation sessions, company handbooks, or discussions with leadership, emphasize how these values guide the company's work and decision-making.
- Foster opportunities for new employees to engage with their colleagues. Organise informal meetups, team lunches, or virtual coffee breaks to help new hires build relationships.
- Team-building exercises or mentorship programs can also play a role in ensuring employees feel integrated into the social fabric of the organisation.

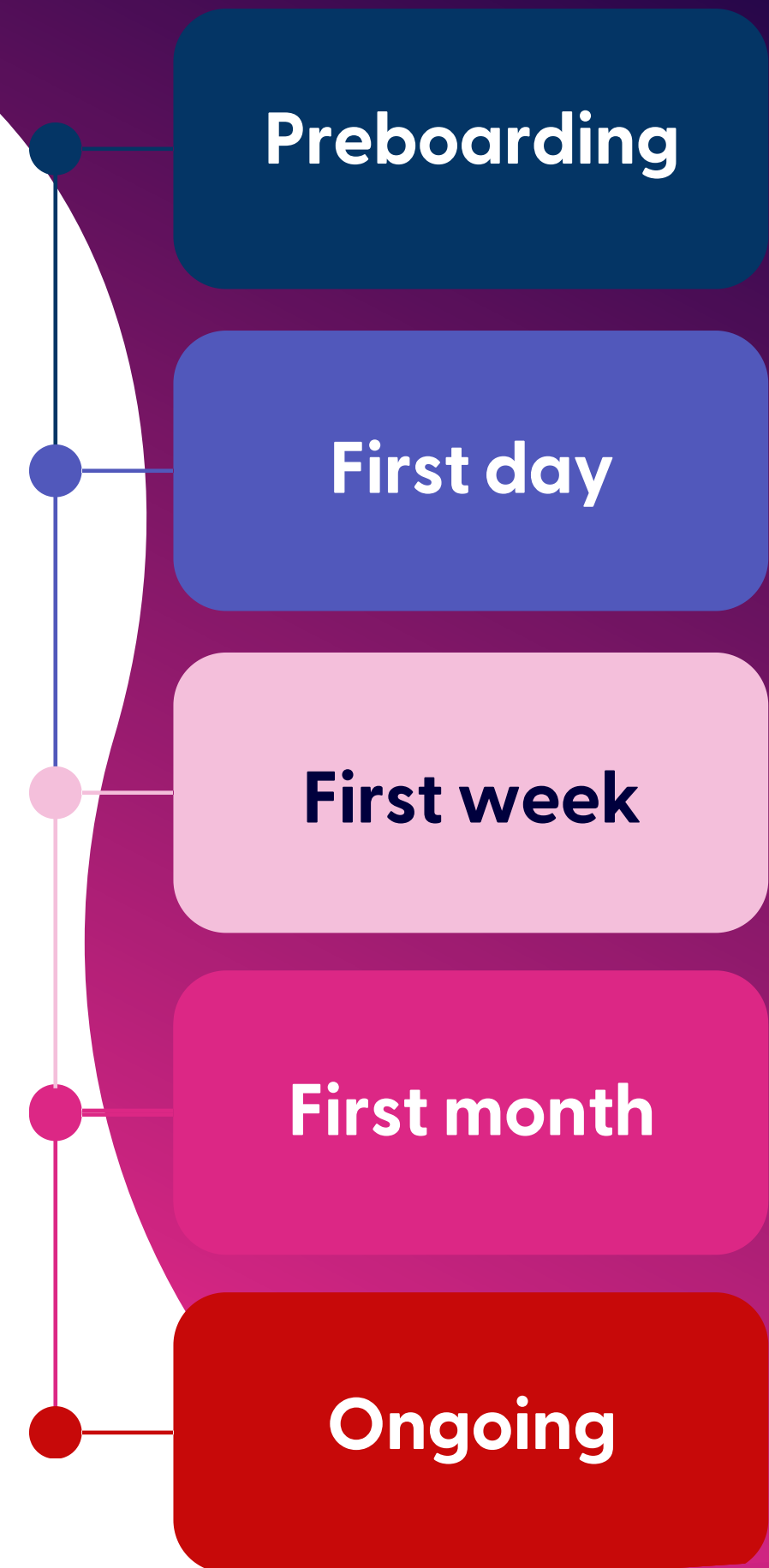
# The stages of onboarding

The onboarding process is not a one-time event but a multi-phase journey designed to help new employees transition smoothly into their roles and the company culture.

Breaking onboarding into distinct stages ensures that new hires receive the right information, support, and training at the appropriate times, preventing overwhelm and fostering engagement.

By carefully managing each phase, companies can set employees up for long-term success, ensuring they feel confident, connected, and prepared to contribute effectively.

Let's explore the key stages of an effective onboarding process and how they build a strong foundation for new hires.



# Preboarding

Preboarding is the stage that occurs after an employee accepts a job offer but before their official start date.

It focuses on preparing new hires for their first day, ensuring they feel welcomed and informed before they even step into the office or log on remotely.

It's an opportunity to build excitement, reduce first-day anxiety, and ensure a smooth transition into the formal onboarding process.

## Send a welcome package

Provide a warm welcome through a personalised email, letter, or even a physical welcome kit.

Include company-branded items, a note from their manager, or helpful materials to help reduce first-day nerves.

## Get set up

Send essential forms (tax forms, employment agreements, benefits enrollment, etc.) to be completed before the start date to avoid delays.

Ensure that the employee's workstation, computer, email accounts, and necessary software or access credentials are ready to go.

## Introduce them

Provide clear instructions, including start time, dress code, schedule, and who they'll meet with. Send an email introducing the new hire to their team, supervisor, and any relevant contacts.

If possible, schedule a preboarding virtual meet-and-greet with their manager or team

# First day

The first day at work should be a welcoming and structured experience that helps new employees feel comfortable, informed, and excited about their new role.

It begins with a warm greeting, whether in person or virtually, followed by a brief tour or introduction to the team. The day should include setting up their workspace, ensuring they have access to necessary tools, and providing a clear schedule with time for onboarding tasks, introductions, and an initial meeting with their manager.

A buddy or mentor should be assigned for support, and by the end of the day, the new hire should feel confident about what lies ahead in their first week.

## Warm welcome

When your new starter arrives, make sure someone is available to greet them and give them a tour of the office.

Have their workstation set up for them so they have access to all the tools they may need.

## Set up an agenda

Share a structured schedule for their first day, including meetings, breaks, and training sessions.

Give them an overview of the tasks or learning modules they'll focus on in their first week, including training programs or shadowing opportunities.

## Set expectations

Give an overview of what the new hire should focus on during their first week, including key learning materials, projects, or meetings.

Outline any key objectives for the first 30 days, helping the employee understand what success looks like early on.

# First week

The first week at work should focus on helping new employees settle in, gain a deeper understanding of their role, and begin integrating into the company culture.

It should include structured onboarding activities, such as role-specific training sessions, shadowing opportunities, and introductions to key stakeholders.

The goal is to gradually introduce them to their responsibilities, set short-term goals, and ensure they feel confident, connected, and prepared to contribute meaningfully in the weeks ahead.

## Deep dive

Share specific responsibilities, key projects, and expectations for their first 30, 60, and 90 days, giving them measurable milestones.

Allow for unstructured time to process what they've learned, and explore resources at their own pace.

## Foster relationship building

Schedule introductions to important colleagues, including team members, cross-functional partners, and senior leadership, to start building relationships.

Arrange team lunches, coffee breaks, or virtual hangouts to help them feel more connected.

## Regular check-ins

Have regular touchpoints with their manager or HR to address any questions or concerns and provide feedback on their progress.

Hold a formal check-in at the end of the week to assess how things are going and identify any challenges or additional support needed.

# First month

The first month at work should focus on deepening the new hire's understanding of their role, building stronger relationships, and becoming more integrated into the team and company culture.

By this time, they should be working on real tasks or projects, gradually taking on more responsibilities while receiving feedback and guidance from their manager or mentor. Regular check-ins should continue to ensure they are on track with their goals and feel supported.

The first month is also a key time for the employee to adjust to the company's workflows, tools, and communication style, setting a solid foundation for future success.

## Assign working tasks

By now, the new hire should be contributing to real tasks that align with their role.

Gradually give them more independence in handling tasks, allowing them to make decisions and take ownership of their work.

## Ongoing training

Continue providing role-specific training, focusing on more complex tools or skills they'll need.

Begin discussing the potential for growth within the company, including opportunities for professional development or career advancement.

## Set and review goals

Review the short-term goals set during onboarding to evaluate their progress and identify areas for improvement.

Establish new objectives for the next 30 to 60 days, focusing on more challenging tasks or projects.

# Ongoing

Preboarding is the stage that occurs after an employee accepts a job offer but before their official start date.

It focuses on preparing new hires for their first day, ensuring they feel welcomed and informed before they even step into the office or log on remotely.

It's an opportunity to build excitement, reduce first-day anxiety, and ensure a smooth transition into the formal onboarding process.

## Conduct a post-onboarding review

Schedule a one-on-one meeting between the employee and their manager to review their onboarding experience, discuss key takeaways, and assess how well they've adjusted.

Review the 30, 60, or 90-day goals set during onboarding and measure their progress.

## Foster autonomy

Gradually give the employee more autonomy, encouraging them to take on more responsibility, make decisions, and lead initiatives.

Acknowledge early wins and contributions to reinforce motivation and provide a sense of accomplishment.

## Transition to performance

Once onboarding is complete, transition to regular performance management, where the focus shifts to long-term development, continuous improvement, and contribution to company goals.

Begin incorporating the new hire into the company's formal review and performance cycle.

# Key components of a good onboarding programme

An effective onboarding program is essential for helping new employees integrate smoothly into the company, setting the foundation for their success and long-term engagement.

Training is a vital component of onboarding, providing employees with the skills and tools they need to succeed. A mix of formal training, shadowing, and ongoing learning opportunities ensures they are well-prepared for their role.

Beyond the first few weeks, team integration and continuous development remain crucial.

By focusing on these key components, an onboarding program sets new employees up for success and strengthens their long-term commitment to the company.



# Onboarding for remote employees

Onboarding remote employees requires a tailored approach that addresses the unique challenges of working from a distance.

Without the benefits of face-to-face interaction or in-office immersion, it's essential to build a virtual onboarding program that fosters connection, engagement, and productivity.

A successful remote onboarding experience should focus on clear communication, building relationships, providing necessary tools and support, and integrating new hires into the company culture.

Here are the essential components of onboarding for remote employees.



# Key components of a good onboarding programme

## Technology setup

Regular communication with managers, mentors, and peers is essential so virtual check-ins are a must to ensure employees aren't isolated or confused about expectations.

## Company culture

Make sure remote employees are introduced to the company's mission, values, and culture through virtual orientations, videos, or interactive sessions.

## Self-paced learning

Ensure that all relevant policies and company information are easily accessible.

Offer e-learning or tutorials that the employee can complete at their own pace

## Encourage engagement

Check in and adjust the process based on their input.

Continuous improvement ensures the onboarding process evolves to meet new needs.

## Frequent check-ins

Regular communication with managers, mentors, and peers is essential so virtual check-ins are a must to ensure employees aren't isolated or confused about expectations.

## Structured training

Pace training over several weeks.

Provide a repository of materials and training resources so the employee can access when needed.

## Support networks

Remote employees benefit from having a dedicated person they can turn to for questions about the role, company culture, or processes.

## Overcoming communication

Use virtual team-building exercises, group projects to foster relationships.

Ensure they're invited to relevant meetings and social events, so they don't feel left out

# Why do you need an LMS for onboarding?

Using an LMS for onboarding is increasingly essential in today's work environment, especially with the rise of remote and hybrid teams.

An LMS centralises the onboarding process, making it easier for organisations to deliver consistent and structured training to new hires, regardless of their location.

With an LMS, employees can access training materials, company policies, and role-specific resources at their own pace, reducing the overwhelm that often accompanies traditional onboarding processes.

This self-paced approach also ensures that each employee can revisit important content as needed, enhancing retention and understanding.



# Benefits of using an LMS for onboarding

In today's fast-paced and increasingly digital workplace, onboarding new employees effectively is crucial to their long-term success and engagement. An LMS plays a pivotal role in transforming traditional onboarding processes, making them more efficient, consistent, and scalable.

## Consistency in training

Guarantee all new employees receive the same high-quality training, no matter where they are located.

This helps standardise training content, from mandatory compliance modules to company values and culture.

By using an LMS, businesses can deliver content that is not only reliable but also easily updated and distributed across teams and locations, supporting seamless scalability.

## Self-paced learning

Enable employees to absorb information at a comfortable speed and revisit materials when needed.

This approach prevents information overload, which can be overwhelming for new employees during their first days or weeks on the job.

By spreading out learning, employees can gradually build confidence in their new role, giving them the space to fully grasp important details and processes.

### **Tracking progress**

With an LMS, easily monitor an employee's progress throughout the onboarding journey.

You can ensure that new hires complete all required courses and tasks, providing a clear view of how well they are integrating into the company.

If gaps are identified, additional resources or support can be provided to address them.

### **Scalability**

For growing businesses, an LMS is an invaluable tool for scaling onboarding efforts without overwhelming HR teams.

Instead of relying on in-person training sessions that need to be repeated for every new hire, an LMS allows you to onboard multiple employees simultaneously, no matter the size of the incoming class. It also automates repetitive tasks saving valuable time for HR professionals.

### **Personalised and adaptive learning**

An LMS allows for a personalised onboarding experience by tailoring learning paths to each role, department, and location. Employees can receive training that is directly relevant to their specific responsibilities, ensuring they acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their roles. Adaptive learning features in modern LMS platforms can also adjust the content or difficulty based on a new hire's progress, enabling more efficient learning.

# Integrating a new LMS

Ready to implement a new LMS to better your onboarding process?

BuildEmpire has a whole host of tools and features available that can support you to build better onboarding experiences. As a platinum partner of Totara, we're primed to support businesses of any size to create better learning solutions.

Want to know how?

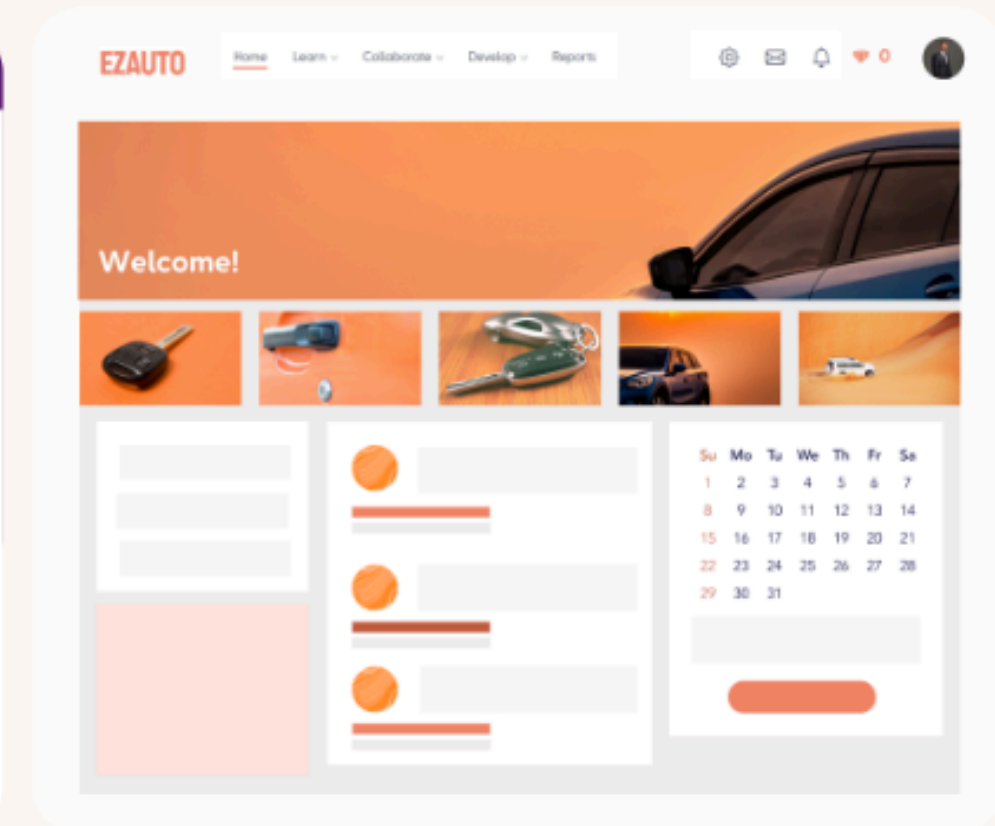
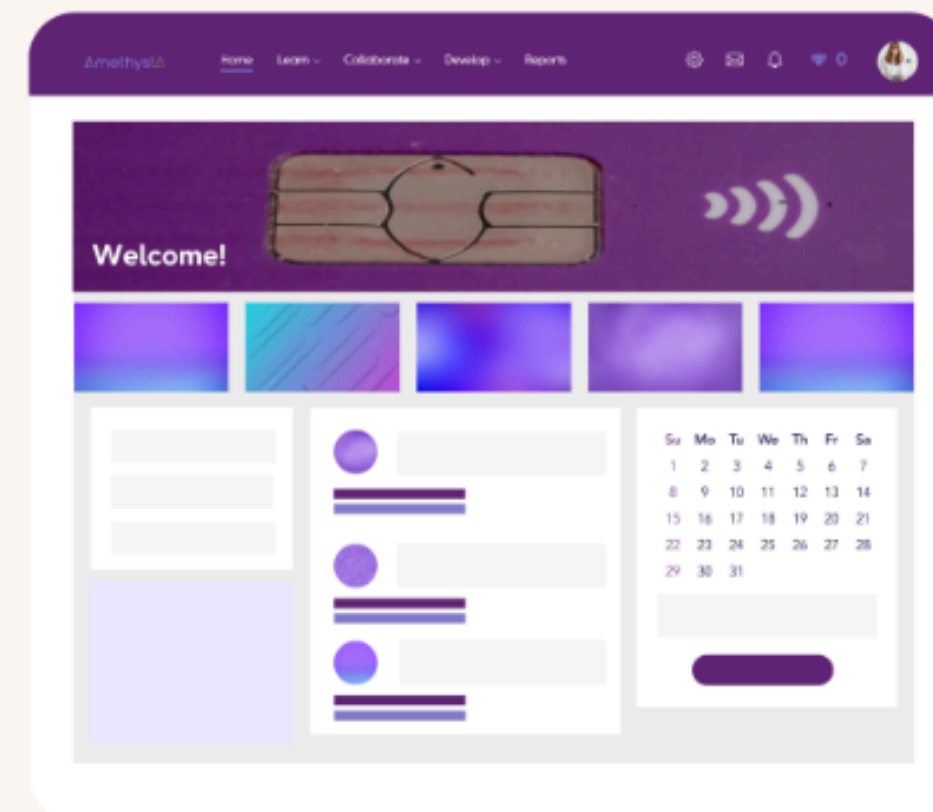
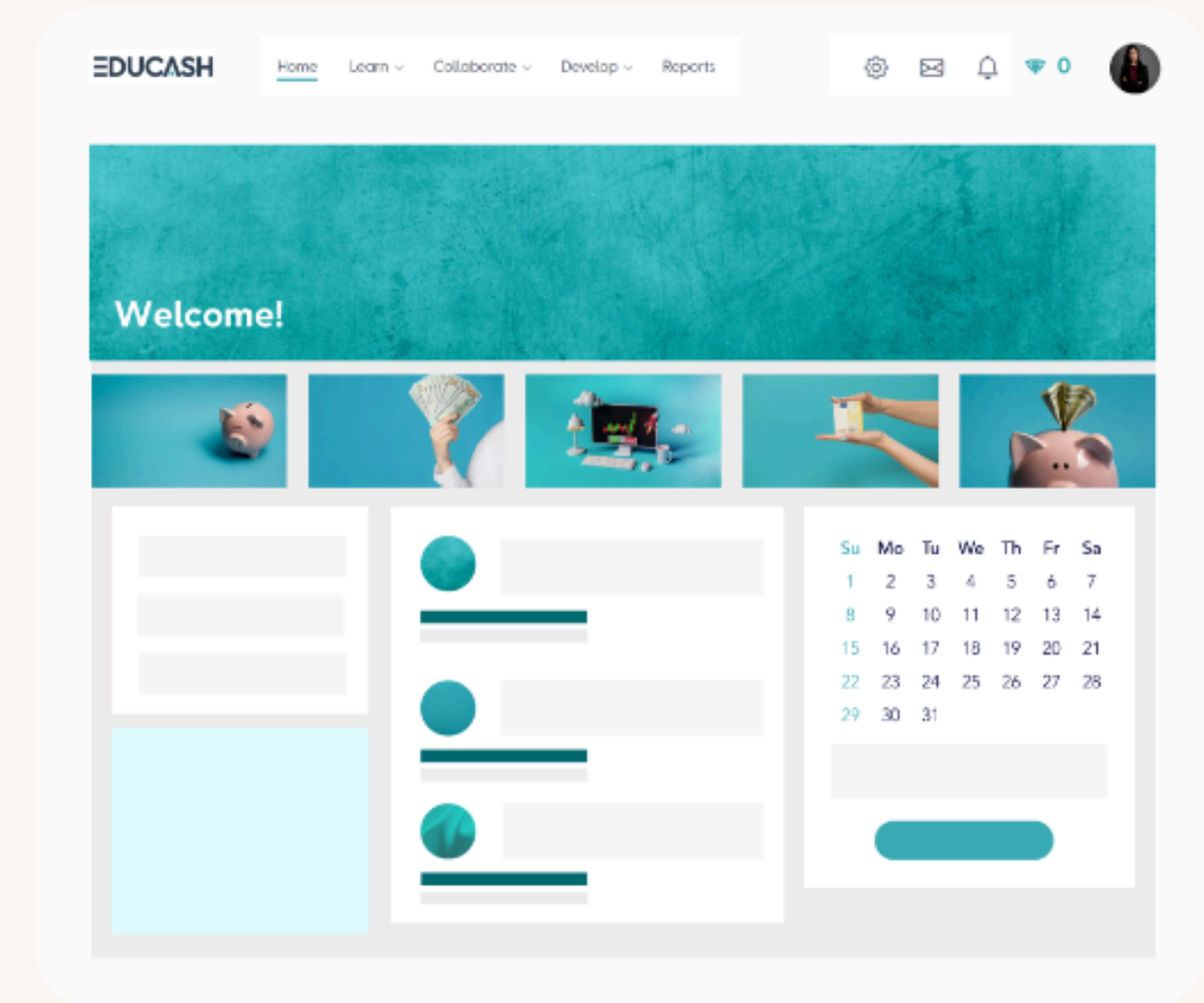
Let's explore what BuildEmpire can offer you for better onboarding.



# Dynamic audiences and dashboards

Use dashboards and multi-tenancy to personalise the onboarding experience for each new employee through dynamic audiences.

Create different homepages for new starters, or use multi-tenancy to brand up different user experiences.



### Compliance Courses

All courses in this set must be completed (unless this is an optional set).



Induction

100%

Launch course



Treating Customers Fairly

0%

Launch course



Data Protection

0%

Launch course



Work Health and Safety

12%

Launch course

## Next

### Wellbeing and Personal Development

At least 5 course(s) in this set must be completed.



Using Creative Problem Solving

0%

Not available



Introduction to mental health

0%

Not available



Introduction to continuous performance...

0%

Not available



Accessibility and inclusion in digital health

No criteria

Not available



Accessibility of eLearning

No criteria

Not available



Improving Team Effectiveness

0%

Not available

# Customise the journey

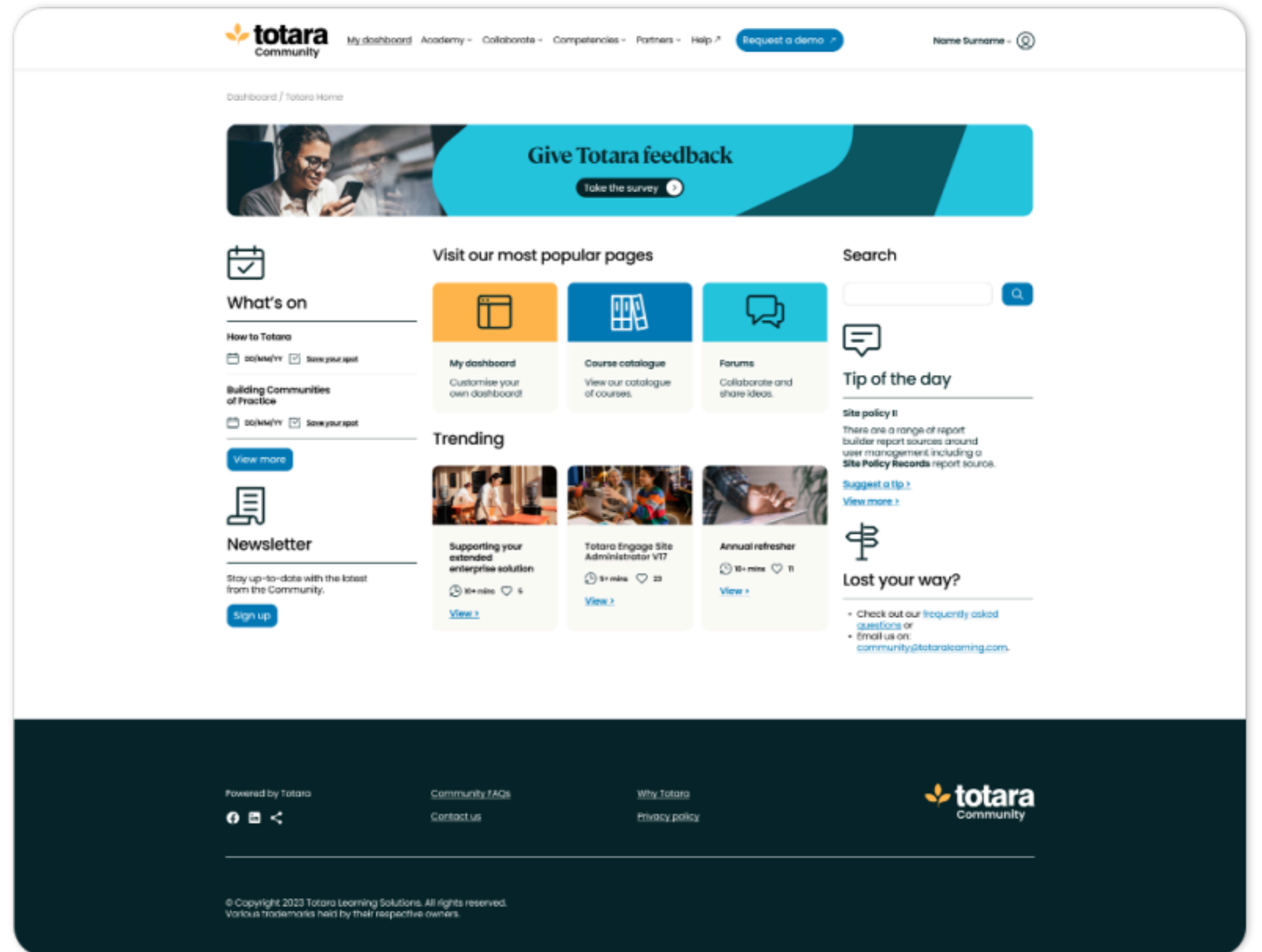
Add people into continuous professional development and career pathways.

Plus, easily build courses, programs, learning plans and certification pathways. With automation and learning paths, you can create bespoke learning experiences to suit each learner.

# Social spaces

Totara includes social learning features that encourage collaboration, discussion, and peer support, which can help new hires feel more connected, even in remote or hybrid work environments.

Features like forums, group learning activities, and real-time chat provide channels for new employees to connect with mentors and peers.



# Other key features

The BuildEmpire version of Totara is highly effective for onboarding due to its flexibility, robust feature set, and focus on delivering tailored learning experiences that meet the specific needs of each organisation.

Here are some key reasons why Totara is a strong choice for onboarding:

## Add users in bulk

HR import allows you to add users in bulk and automate user updates

## Comprehensive reporting

Our reporting tools make it easy to track and document completed trainings and certifications

## Speak the same language

Customise the interface to meet the needs of diverse, international, multi-lingual audiences

## Automated follow-up

Automatic reminders and deadlines can be set for new hires, helping to keep learning and training front of mind

## Seamless integration

Easily integrate tools so learners can access the resources they need and HR can get a full view of employee data.

## Transitional learning

As new hires transition out of onboarding, they can access role-specific training within the same platform.

# So, what now?

Well fingers crossed, we're a good match for you.

Whether you're looking for a simple LMS to help you hit your objectives, or you want a more complex and customised platform to suit more bespoke needs, we can help.

[Book a demo](#) to see our product in action and to start the journey of partnering with BuildEmpire.

