

## **BRINGING NEW TEAM MEMBERS INTO YOUR TEAM**

### **What is team member socialization?**

Socialization is the process by which new team members become part of the team—i.e., the process by which *outsiders become insiders*<sup>1</sup>. Socialization is a continuous process that involves both the team and the newcomer.

### **Why is it important?**

Research shows that understanding the newcomer and team role in the socialization process while investing in the process leads to more *committed* and *satisfied members*, *higher job performance*, and *cost savings* based on lower turnover rates.

### **How to ACE Team Member Socialization**

**Acceptance:** fostering connections & developing the quality of relationships with existing team members and other organizational stakeholders while helping the newcomers feel liked, accepted, and trusted.

- Quickly label and refer to newcomers as team members
- Introduce newcomers to other team members either through email or face-to-face
- Tell the team about newcomer's competence and potential to boost expectations
- Have new members introduce themselves during the first team meeting
- Assign a mentor from within the team and/or organization to every new member
- Establish contact between newcomers and different departments/hierarchies within the organization
- Foster mutual trust between new members and the team
- Encourage newcomers to bring their authentic selves to the team
- Check in with other members about their perceptions of newcomer adjustment

**Clarity: reducing ambiguity by enhancing understanding of team/organizational norms and what is needed for the newcomer's role and tasks.**

- Review the team charter with the newcomer to enhance understanding of how the team operates, including roles and responsibilities, norms, and operating procedures
- Explain communication methods and response norms
- Outline work scope, objectives and key responsibilities of team & newcomer
- Set expectations around work schedule
- Give direction and advice around how to spend first week
- Provide feedback frequently

**Empowerment: providing newcomers with training and support to be able to perform in their role and increase motivation by boosting confidence, building self-efficacy, and providing organizational/supervisor support.**

- Train on tools and software necessary for position
- Evaluate newcomer motivation and find ways to tap into it
- Assign the new member a meaningful role within the team
- Assign the new member meaningful tasks that make significant contributions toward achieving the team's goals
- Empower newcomers by providing challenging work
- Involve newcomers in important decision-making processes
- Check in with newcomers frequently and remain available over time

Additional Sources

<sup>1</sup> Bauer, T. N., & Erdogan, B. (2011). *Organizational socialization: The effective onboarding of new employees*. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology, Vol. 3*. (p. 51-64). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/12171-002>.

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