

A strong retention strategy includes a successful onboarding program that supports the integration of all new hires into the team. In Canada, where approximately 40% of the population is considered immigrant, it's particularly important to have a plan in place for your international employees. We've talked about the [importance of onboarding before](#), but how should you go about it?

Contract Support

Try putting yourself in your new employee's shoes. They've just committed to big changes, not only to their role, but also their home, their country and, in many cases, the language they'll use every day. Now, imagine signing a contract in another language that relies on unfamiliar laws.

Review your new employee's contract with them, and offer them resources so that they can have a third party support them in the review. It's important that they understand what they're agreeing to so they know their rights and the entirety of their offer.

Welcome Packages

Settling in can be intimidating. Your new employee is trying to get established within your company while also handling the day-to-day, like transit, doctors, schools, and groceries.

You can help them by putting some simple resources in place that include basics, like how to obtain medical insurance, how to find housing, where to buy groceries, information on the closest banks, and a list of community programs that are available free of charge.

This information helps ease their transition to life in a new city. The faster you help them settle in, the faster they can focus on succeeding in their new role.

Buddy System

Loneliness is hard. In fact, it's one of the primary reasons that newly relocated hires leave in the first 90 days. We recommend buddying your new hire with someone from a different team, so that they are introduced to people outside of their own bubble. The buddy should have lunch with the new employee a few times in the first few months. They can also make introductions and ensure that the new hire is invited to social gatherings.

Office Culture

Many companies operate using an unwritten code that can be hard for an outsider to learn. Is there an established approvals process or decision-making procedure? Does everyone grab coffee or go for a break together? Identify nuances that can help new people feel like they belong, and use HR, the manager, and the buddy to introduce these subtleties to the new hire.



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Clear Expectations

With new immigrants, as with any new hire, it's important to eliminate as many variables as possible, since they're already experiencing a great deal of change. We recommend building a 30/60/90 day plan and staying in frequent communication with your new team member. Set up regular 1:1s, and get to know them on a personal basis.



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Feedback Styles

Be mindful of communication and the feedback loop. Feedback delivery and reception can differ massively from company to company, so imagine how different it can be from country to country. When your new hire joins your team, ask them how they like feedback/feedforward: is it formal or informal, written or spoken? Do they feel comfortable asking for help when they need it? This feedback loop will support their success as a new member of the team. It will also allow the manager to understand how best to communicate with the new hire.

Need help crafting your successful onboarding strategy? [Get in touch with us!](#)