



# HR Conference

Elevating the Employee Experience

## Session 2B: Elevate the Onboarding Experience



Presented by:  
Erica Chapplear, *Kahler Slater*

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## Learning Objectives

- Identify ways to understand your organization's unique onboarding needs by surveying and using focus groups to discover the current state of onboarding, and dream of the best course of action for onboarding.
- Define ways to raise the bar in employee onboarding to elevate the experience for new employees.
- Design strategies and use technology to support onboarding logistics that ease the work of HR professionals.
- Analyze strategies to measure onboarding success to deliver an onboarding program that solidifies employee loyalty for the future.

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# Kahler Slater



Fitzhugh Scott



First Commission



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# Kahler Slater

## SERVICES & MARKETS

Architecture | Interior Design | Strategic Advisory | Environmental Branding



Community Recreation  
+ Wellness



Corporate



Cultural + Civic



Health + Sciences  
Education



Healthcare



Higher Education



Hospitality + Restaurants



Medical Office Buildings



Residential



Sports + Recreation

## OFFICE LOCATIONS

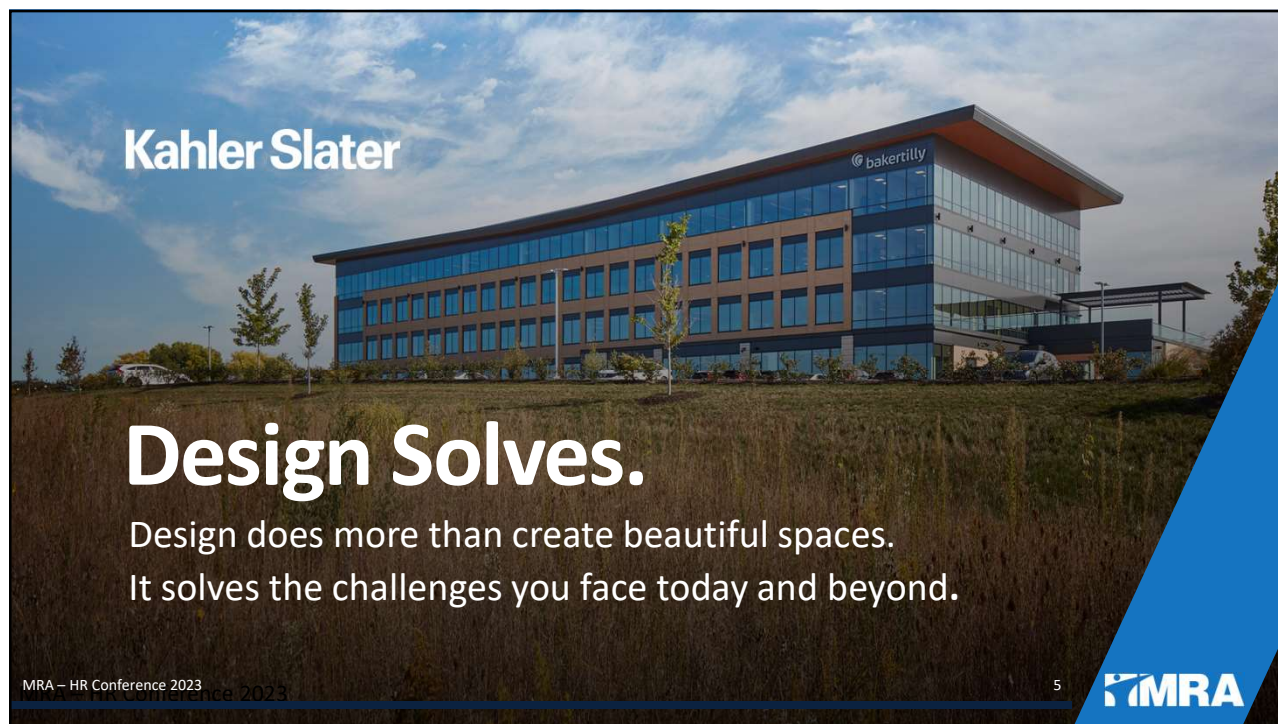
Milwaukee | Madison | Richmond | Chicago | Singapore

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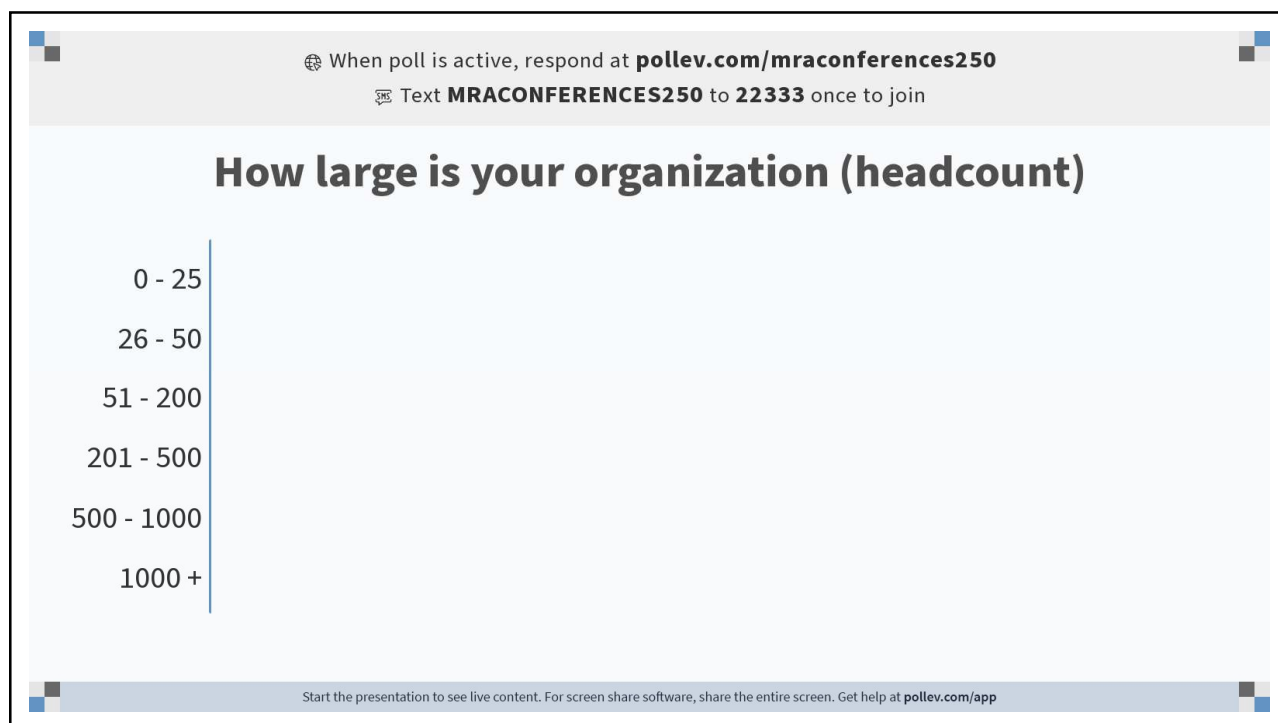
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# Why Does Onboarding Matter?

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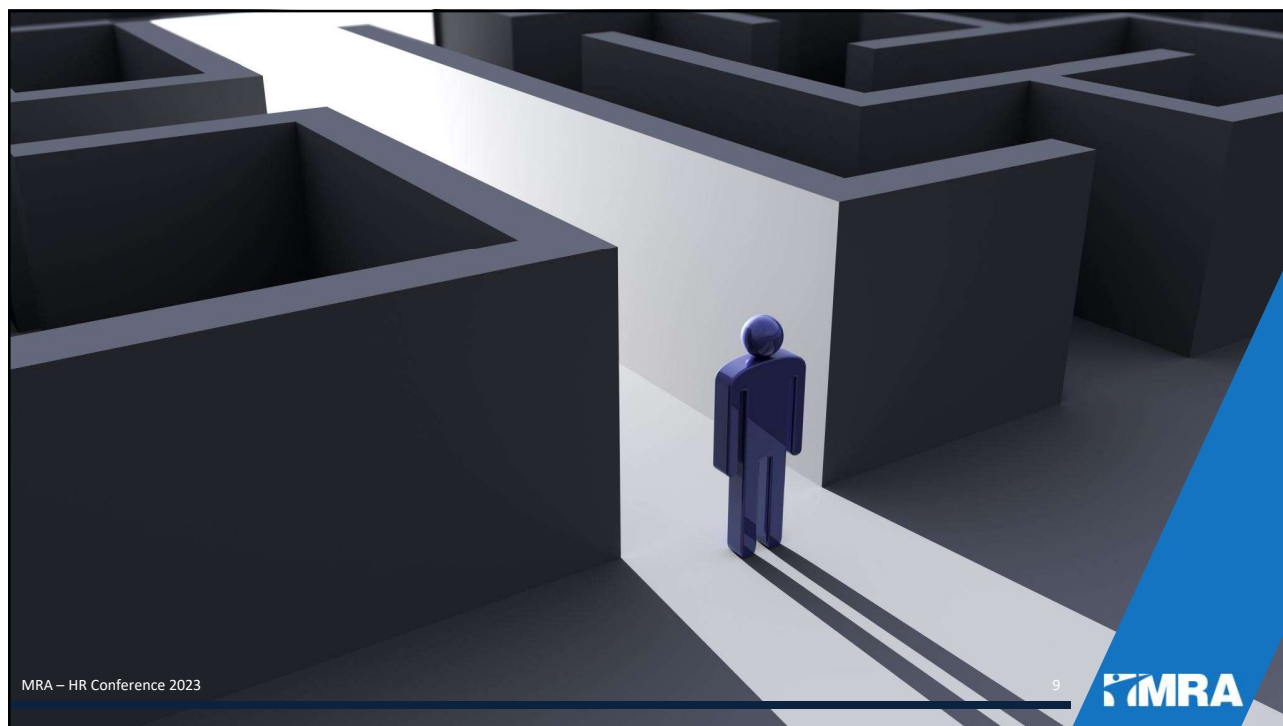


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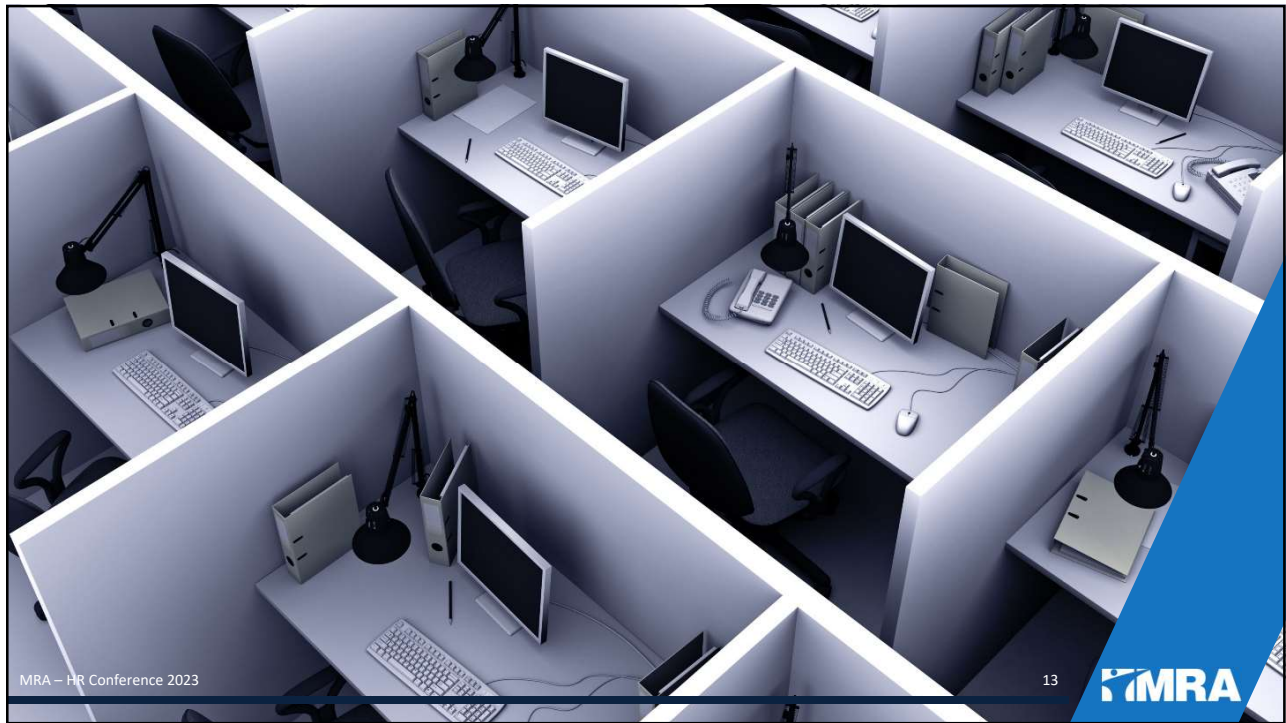


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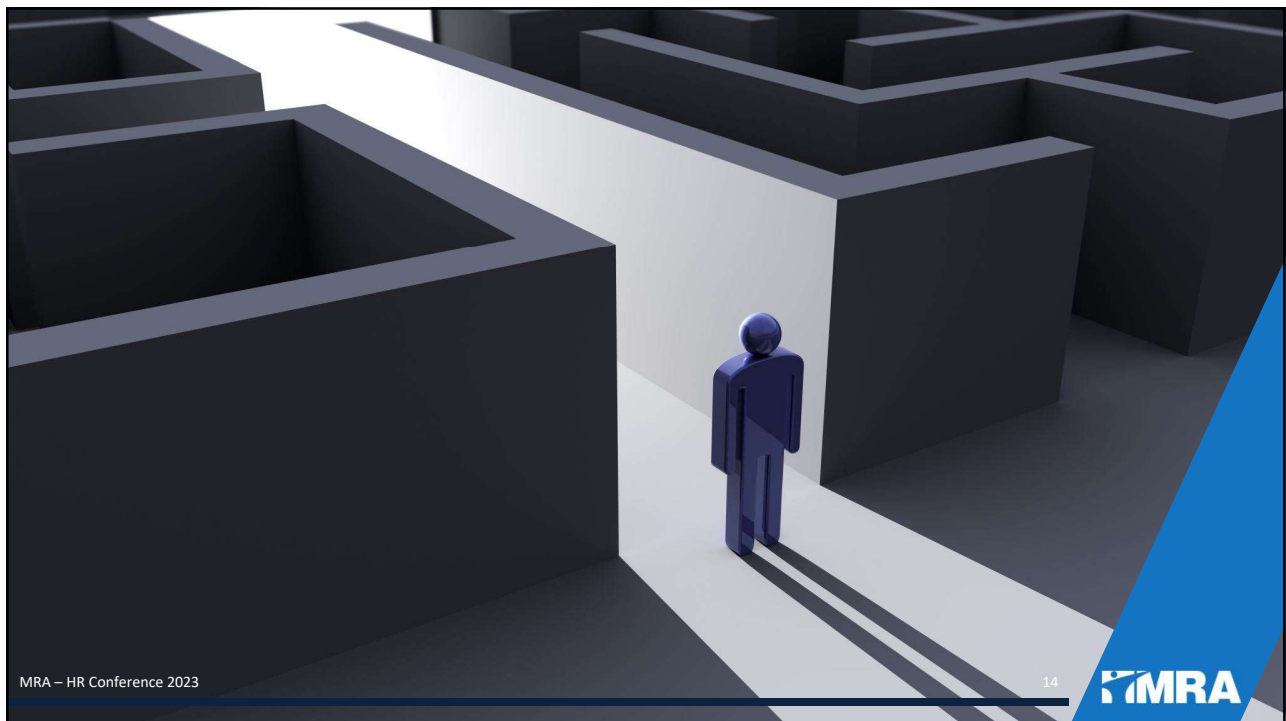


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# Case Study

- Where We Were
- Defining/Developing the Next Steps
- Best Practices and Program Elements
- Measuring Success

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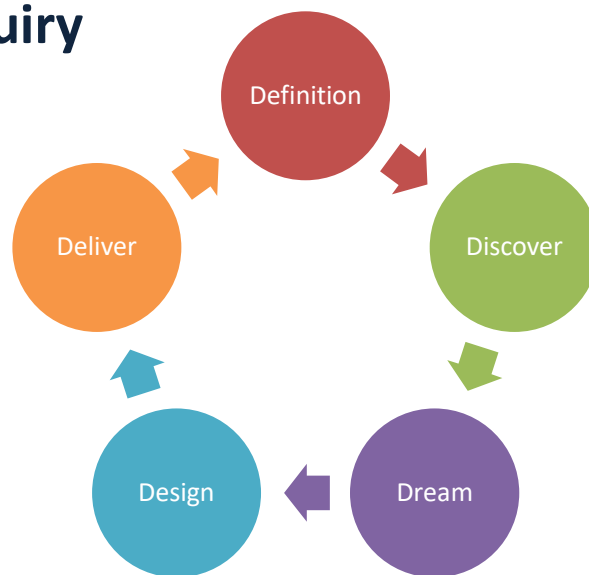
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## Where We Were

- In 2017/2018 New Hires 0-2 per month
- Summer Interns 3-4
- Onboarding Team Focused

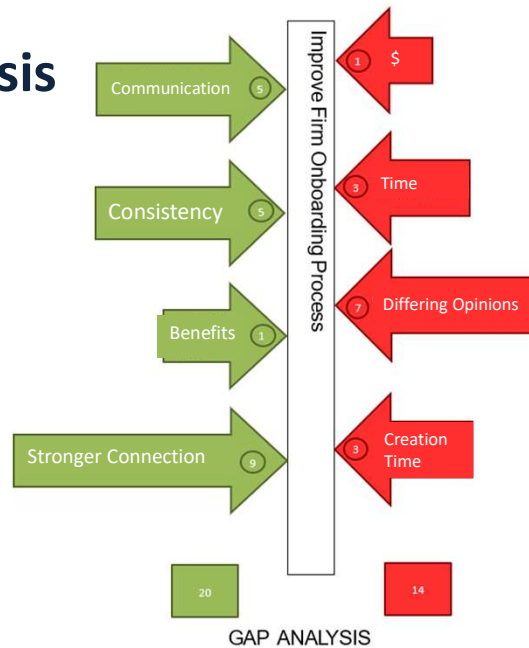
## Appreciative Inquiry



## Developing the Program

- Force Field Analysis
- SWOT
- Focus Groups Using Appreciative Inquiry Questions

## Force Field Analysis





# SWOT



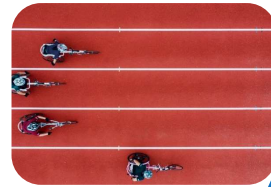
Strengths



Weaknesses



Opportunities



Threats

## Focus Groups

- Open to all
- Blended groups no more than 8
- Appreciative inquiry questions



## Appreciative Inquiry Questions Examples

### Instead of:

- What does our competition do better?
- What is the main problem with our onboarding?

### Try:

- experiences of onboarding have you been part of in other companies that you feel could be helpful to our new employees?
- What are some of the positives about our current onboarding process?
  - In what ways could the current onboarding process be even better?

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## What Was Going Well

- People felt welcome
  - Office buddy
  - First-day lunch
  - Lunch with principals
  - Walk-around introductions



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## Start/Do More

- Communicate more prior to start
  - To employee
  - To firm
- Extend the structured agenda
- Brag material
  - Project
  - Swag
- One-stop shop
- Transitional onboarding (contract to full-time)
- Follow-through



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## Stop Doing This

**Assuming!**



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## Best Practices

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## Evolution

- 2018 Low Hiring
- 2020 New Chicago Office/Pandemic/Move to Virtual
- 2021/2022 New HRIS/New Milwaukee Office

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## Calendar, Not Email

- Invites are more noticeable
- Emails get lost



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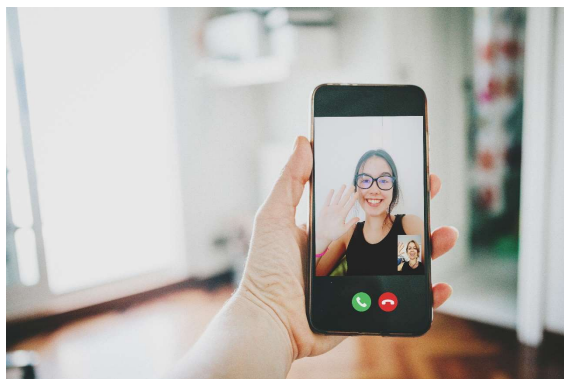
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## Personalize the Experience

- Pre-start call
- Get-to-know-you email
- Scheduled one-on-ones



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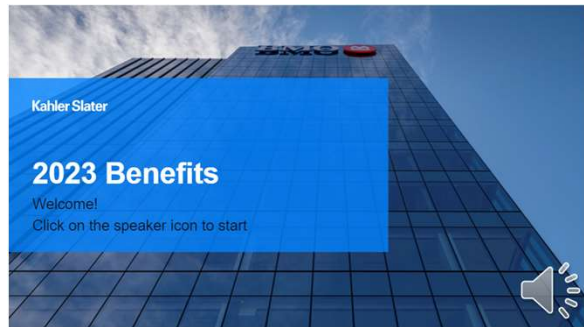
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## Engage Subject Matter Experts

- Consistent presentations
- Variety of voices



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## Eliminate Paper

- SharePoint and HRIS



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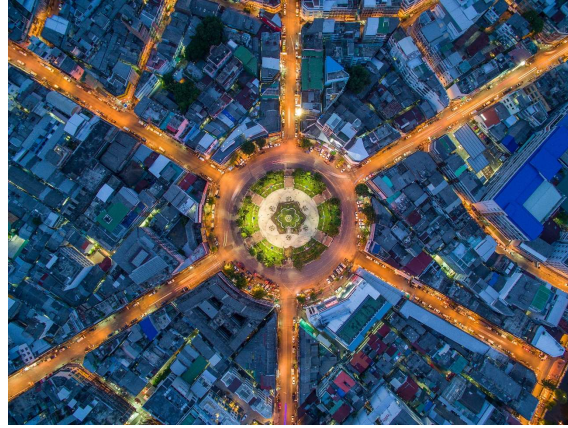


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## One-Stop Shop

- Files on intranet
- Who's who directory
- Links to external resources



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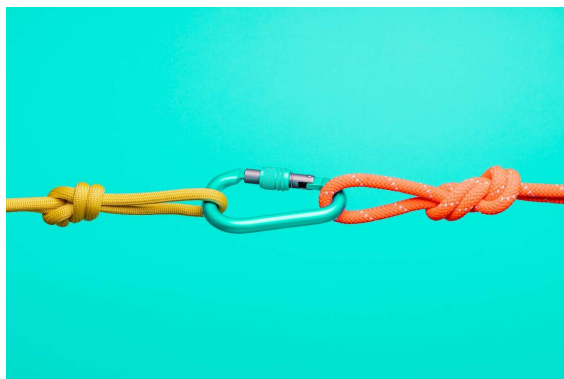
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## Before-During-After Resources

- 20/60/90/120 Day
- First-year cohort



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## How Did We Get It Done?

- Structured schedule for standard sessions
- Standard presentations for teams
- Right people on the right tasks

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## Outcomes

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## What key performance indicators does your HR team capture around onboarding?

- Voluntary turnover
- Overall turnover
- Pulse survey of employee engagement
- We don't collect key performance indicators
- Something else

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## Key Performance Indicators

- Voluntary turnover
  - Short-term
  - Long-term
- Employee engagement survey
  - Resources
  - Manager support
- Onboarding survey

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## Comments From Staff About Onboarding

- “I was pointed in the right direction for any specific questions or topics I was interested in learning more about, which was helpful with the amount of information you are receiving at once to be able to revisit or learn more about certain things.”
- “Plenty of time to figure things out”
- “Kahler Slater's onboarding program is much more developed and structured than my previous firm. I think that we are well above average, especially considering our size.”

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## Comments From Staff About Onboarding

“Well laid out. Distributed amongst KS experts, so not spending the entire time with a single person or the HR department (nothing personal;) ) having an onboarding buddy is nice. Also deliberate scheduled one-on-one meetings with a good number of teammates and others NOT on your individual team helps new hires to get the ‘whole picture.’”

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# Questions?

