

# STORYTELLING & ONBOARDING

A guide to help you deliver better onboarding experiences through stories.

**TiER1**  
PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS

# THE IMPACT OF STORYTELLING IN ONBOARDING

Storytelling can help your organization engage potential and new employees throughout the onboarding process by creating a human connection to your organization's mission, values, and strategy.

Use this guide to learn about opportunities for storytelling in each of these three phases of onboarding: Preboarding, Orientation, and Role-Based Development.

At the end of this guide, we've crafted a worksheet for you to adapt these ideas to fit your current onboarding process and organizational needs.

## 3 PHASES



# **EXAMPLES OF STORY-DRIVEN ONBOARDING**

# PREBOARDING

PREBOARDING

ORIENTATION

ROLE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

## Build the anticipation.

Existing Process	Opportunity	Story Prompts	What It Does
Marketing your company via branded channels (e.g., company website)	Highlight individual employee stories (written or recorded)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ask individual employees, “Why do you do what you do and how did you come to do it here?”</li><li>Feature stories of what employees do outside of work to deepen the personal connection</li></ul>	Creates a human connection between the organization and potential candidates
Interviews	Request personal stories of motivation from candidates	Encourage candidates to tell stories about a past setback or career shift: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What motivated them?</li><li>What actions did they take to overcome it?</li></ul>	Helps provide more information on whether a candidate is a good culture fit

# ORIENTATION

PREBOARDING

ORIENTATION

ROLE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

## Make a great first experience.

Existing Process	Opportunity	Story Prompts	What It Does
New hire cohorts	Foster fun, personal storytelling opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was the first job that a new hire ever worked?</li><li>• What was their favorite class in school?</li><li>• How do they like to spend their free time?</li></ul>	Builds trust and connection among new hires
Welcome session	Invite leaders to meet new hires in person (if possible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What has helped leaders succeed in the organization?</li><li>• What unique challenges have they overcome?</li><li>• How do they apply the company's mission, values, and strategy to their work?</li></ul>	Connects new hires to stories about how leaders are inspired by your organization

# ROLE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

PREBOARDING

ORIENTATION

ROLE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

## Engage their hearts and minds.

Existing Process	Opportunity	Story Prompts	What It Does
Participating in the learning center	Incorporate development-focused storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Match new hires to others with similar aspirations or in positions they aspire to</li><li>• Invite them to share stories of times they experienced growth or met new challenges</li></ul>	Helps new hires envision their future growth and stay engaged for the long term
1-on-1 or team meetings	Encourage stories that build camaraderie and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What have new hires learned from past experiences that could improve a team project?</li><li>• Who are their role models? Who inspires them?</li><li>• What's the best advice they've gotten?</li></ul>	Builds trust and connection between new hires and their team

# **OPPORTUNITIES FOR STORIES: ACTION PLAN**

# DEVELOPING YOUR ACTION PLAN

## Instructions

Using the examples we've shared and the questions below, fill out the worksheet on the next page to find where your storytelling opportunities exist.

## Questions to Consider

- In your current onboarding process, where would you like to increase new hire engagement?
- How could you adapt your onboarding process to allow for more opportunities for storytelling and engagement?
- What ideas does your team have for involving or including new hires?



# ONBOARDING PHASE:

Existing Process	Story Idea