



TIP SHEET: ONBOARDING

5 Tips for Success

1

A lasting youth employee relationship starts before day one.

- Has there been any interaction with the youth between when they were formally hired and their first day? Early communication, such as a call before start date to check in and see if the youth have any questions can establish connections, manage expectations, and alleviate stress, and help the youth feel confident, inspired, and fully prepared to contribute from day one.

2

Align manager and youth expectations.

- Does the manager understand the youth's capabilities, potential areas for growth and accommodations that may be needed? Helpful accommodations can be minor and manageable for employers (i.e. adjusting the start time or pace of work), but asking questions about what's needed in a safe and trusted environment is key to surfacing any needs. If you've hired through a community agency, you can gather these insights in conversation with the agency.
- Does the youth have a clear idea of what to expect from their manager and know what their manager expects of them? You can help them gather these insights in one-on-one conversations prior to onboarding or during their first week. For example, clarify to the youth what specifically they need to do, and define one or two behaviours expected of them the first week. Tie the behaviour to recognition or a small reward that they can earn at the end of the week.

3

Customize training for managers and youth.

Managers:

- Does the manager know how to support the special needs of youth? Suggest weekly check-ins for the first 30 days to convey expectations and provide feedback. At the end of each week, review the expectations and, using positive examples, discuss what went well and what should be done differently. Encourage the manager to engage HR or a youth mentor to talk through any challenges.

Youth:

- Provide youth with training beyond their job skills to build know-how and confidence when interacting with co-workers. For example how to ask for help and feedback, and how to identify any challenges they may face as they adjust to their work environment.
- Set aside time to provide youth with on-the-job training or job shadowing so expectations and processes are clear.
- Offer an opportunity to ask questions, to learn more about team members and to understand specifics about their role.



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4

Establish regular check-ins to stay on top of how youth is faring.

Youth may require greater monitoring to gauge how they are doing during onboarding, as they may lack the confidence to ask for help.

- > Set up regular check-ins between the youth and manager where they can create a cycle of focus and accountability. These are opportunities to determine if the youth is adjusting to the job, has questions, or needs to be redirected.

5

Match youth with mentors.

A committed and compassionate mentor who invests in the new hire's career is critical for success.

- > Assign a mentor (senior co-worker other than their direct manager) and/or a buddy (peer) for youth to voice any concerns/challenges freely in a safe space. This person can help troubleshoot issues while building confidence and should act as an ambassador with other staff.