

The first day on the job is a lot like the first day of school, which for many, can be a nerve-racking experience. Below is a list of suggestions that will create a welcoming, positive, and engaging experience for your new employee.

1. **Send out a welcome letter.** Shortly after the offer is accepted, send out a welcome letter confirming the hire date, start time, and agreed upon salary/wages. Be sure to include any parking instructions and where the employee can check in on the first day.
2. **Assign a mentor.** Make arrangements for the mentor to meet with the new employee on his or her first day; perhaps arrange a lunch date for the two. This mentor will not only be the point person for the employee's training but also someone the new employee can go to for questions.
3. **Hang a "welcome" sign.** What could be more welcoming than hanging a sign with the new employee's name on his or her desk or staff lounge? Want to step it up a bit? Add company swag or pick up a bouquet of flowers or a house plant as an added bonus. Include a card with all the employees' signatures to make the new employee feel welcome at your organization.
4. **Send out an email.** Welcome the new employee by sending a company-wide email to all staff sharing the new employee's name, title, and start date. If your workplace has a company newsletter, this is another opportunity to share the news of announcing your new hire.
5. **Tour the building.** Never underestimate the power of knowing where the restrooms are.
6. **Develop an orientation calendar.** In the first few days and weeks of a new work environment, employees may take comfort in knowing what is on his or her schedule. Include upcoming staff meetings, training schedules, work shadow times, or independent time to review policies, standards of company practice, or set up work space. During the first day or two, don't bog the employee down with paperwork and policies. Use this time for bonding with co-workers, mentors, and bosses. Be sure to include time for the employee to be productive in his or her new role.
7. **Check in.** Ask how things are going. Offer an opportunity for the employee to provide feedback to you on his or her experience. Is there anything that you could be doing better? Now is a good time to ask.
8. **Create the space.** Does your new employee have everything he or she needs to perform his or her job? Does s/he have business cards, email log-in, phone, VM set-up, and supplies? If possible, have the employee's work space ready to go prior to the first day. It conveys the message of "welcome, we have been waiting for you and we are glad you are here."
9. **Share the staff directory.** Do you have an online photo directory of your staff? This will give your new employee the feeling of getting to know his or her co-workers early. Schedule time with various members of the staff throughout the first few weeks so that the new employee has a chance to bond with his or her new co-workers and learn more about their roles within the company.
10. **Provide benefit information.** Allow time on the first day for the new employee to ask questions about benefits, compensation, or company policies. This is also a time for you to share your vision, values, and mission of the organization.