

Onboarding roadmap and checklist for new engineers and developers

Every organization's onboarding processes for new engineers and developers will be a little different, but there's a common pathway to success for most technical teams. Check out our technical onboarding roadmap and checklist to learn what the first three months can look like for a new engineer or developer.

Week 1

Goal for week 1: During this first week, you want your new hire to

- Know what they will be doing each day.
- Feel welcomed by several key team members who share & discuss some initial key information to help get the new hire up to speed in their role.
- Have some fun working on a few small tickets/assignments.
- Get a good first glimpse at how the team/department operates.
- Feel pumped about their new job and team by the end of the week.

Week 1 onboarding schedule checklist

- Introduce your new hire to their onboarding buddy.
- Provide a clear onboarding plan with a calendar of all the scheduled meetings, training sessions, and other events and links to essential information.
- Assign a peer or dedicated tech support colleague to help your new hire set up their equipment, tools, dev environments, and accounts (messaging channels, project boards, etc.)
- Schedule daily meetings with their manager for at least 10–15 minutes each day throughout their first week - ideally at the start of each day.
- Schedule a meeting with a different team member for 30 minutes each day. Be thoughtful about who the first five people are. Plan what each member talks about so that it contributes to getting the new hire up to speed. Think of these meetings as both introductions & brief training sessions. Prepare the materials/documentation they share in these meetings.
- Invite your new hire to attend a few of your department's weekly team meetings, e.g., invite them to a sprint planning meeting, dev meeting, dev hangout, etc.
- Task your new hire to work on 1–3 small tickets/bugs to get used to your dev processes and build trust with their new coworkers.

Week 2

Goal for week 2: During this second week, you want your new hire to

- Gain a detailed understanding of your organization's code base, systems, processes, workflows, projects, project dependencies, etc.
- Meet more team members.
- Learn by taking on slightly more complex tickets/bug fixes.
- Get to know the rest of the organization.
- Feel like they can start to contribute.

Week 2 onboarding schedule checklist

- Schedule for them to meet their boss three times during this second week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday.)
- Identify which parts of your technical documentation (system documentation, user documentation, process documentation) your new hire needs to study in detail to do their job. Break it into five daily chunks and schedule a meeting each day with their onboarding buddy to discuss key insights and questions they had after reviewing a section.
- Invite your new hire to attend some spec/design/technical meetings.
- Task your new hire with a code review. This will facilitate conversations about the code base. Also, teams often have hidden knowledge within the code that surfaces during a code review, so it's a great learning opportunity for the new hire. Last but not least, given their fresh eyes, your new hire may even discover areas of the code base that need a new perspective.
- Task your new hire with working on 1-3 tickets/bug fixes of slightly increased complexity. Ensure they know you don't expect them to know everything, but want them to learn by doing and asking lots of questions. (Best done through pair programming with their onboarding buddy.)
- Schedule further introduction meetings with a different team member each day. Plan what topic/information each member covers with the new hire. Think of these meetings as both introductions & brief training sessions. Prepare the materials/documentation they share in these meetings.
- Invite your new hire to attend 1-3 meetings with other departments/functions.

Week 3-4

Goal for week 3-4: During this first week, you want your new hire to

- Focus on solidifying their knowledge.
- Build their confidence in their ability to do their new job.

Week 3-4 onboarding schedule checklist

- Schedule a weekly 1:1 with their direct manager.
- End the buddy system, and every two weeks, assign a different, more senior team member to be their mentor. Schedule a formal 1:1 meeting with their mentor each week.
- Organize for the new hire to spend two days each week working as part of the customer support team to answer technical questions for customers.
- Task them to work individually on several medium-sized tickets without assistance from their former onboarding buddy.

Week 5-8

Goal for week 5-8: During their second month on the job, you want your new hire to

- Focus on solidifying their knowledge.
- Gain confidence in their ability to do their new job.

Week 5-8 onboarding schedule checklist

- Assign them their first project (and be the dev owner of it.)
- Continue to assign a different, more senior team member to be their mentor every two weeks. Schedule a formal 1:1 meeting with their mentor each week.
- Task them with writing the technical specs for their first project. Have them review this with their mentor before submitting it.
- Continue to task them with working on small/medium tickets during each sprint alongside their first project.

Week 9-11

Goal for week 9-11: During their third month on the job, you want your new hire to

- Become a functioning member of your tech team
- Focus on improving their productivity and the quality of their work

Week 9-11 onboarding schedule checklist

- Allocate more and larger projects to them as dev owner and agree on measurable goals focusing on improving their productivity and code quality.

Week 12

Goal for week 12:

- Conduct informal performance evaluation

Week 12 onboarding schedule checklist

- Invite direct manager and peers to review the new hire - keep it simple. Focus on reviewing them against their job description.
- Invite the new hire to write up a brief self-evaluation
- Ensure all feedback is obtained within the span of a week and the review meeting takes place on the Friday before the weekend. (Even though informal, performance reviews of any kind cause nerves, and you don't want to make the end of their onboarding a nightmare.)