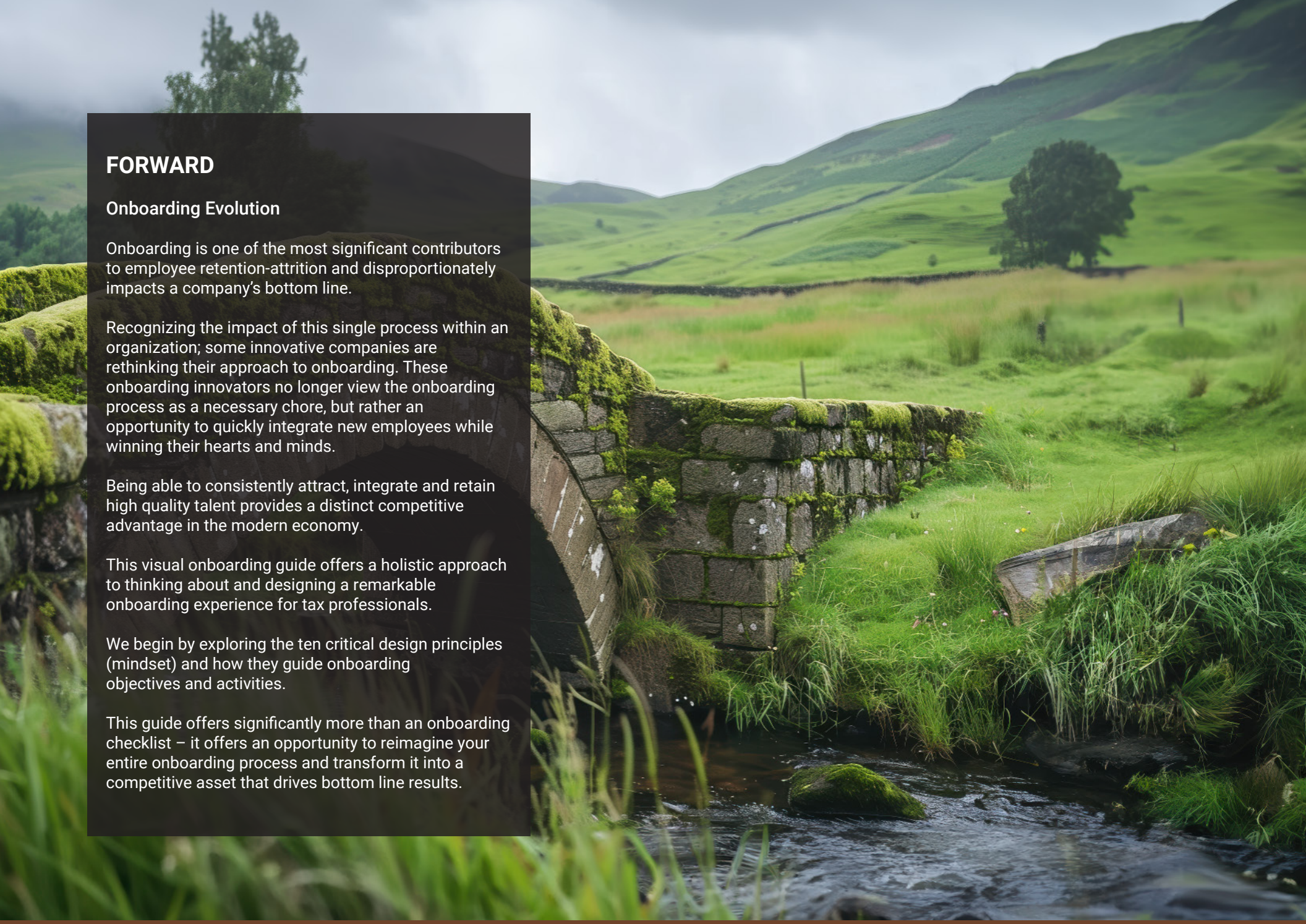
UNITED STATES
& CANADA

GUIDE

ONBOARDING
FOR TAX PROFESSIONALS

FOXWOOD
TAX SEARCH



FORWARD

Onboarding Evolution

Onboarding is one of the most significant contributors to employee retention-attrition and disproportionately impacts a company's bottom line.

Recognizing the impact of this single process within an organization; some innovative companies are rethinking their approach to onboarding. These onboarding innovators no longer view the onboarding process as a necessary chore, but rather an opportunity to quickly integrate new employees while winning their hearts and minds.

Being able to consistently attract, integrate and retain high quality talent provides a distinct competitive advantage in the modern economy.

This visual onboarding guide offers a holistic approach to thinking about and designing a remarkable onboarding experience for tax professionals.

We begin by exploring the ten critical design principles (mindset) and how they guide onboarding objectives and activities.

This guide offers significantly more than an onboarding checklist – it offers an opportunity to reimagine your entire onboarding process and transform it into a competitive asset that drives bottom line results.

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Remarkable

[worthy of being noticed, especially as being extraordinary]

> “ The ability of a group of people to do remarkable things hinges on how well those people pull together as a team. ”

- SIMON SINEK -

ONBOARDING STATISTICS

Sources: Harvard Business, Gartner, Gallup

01

Employees exposed to a good onboarding experience are 18X more likely to feel committed to their organization.

02

77% of employees who had a formal onboarding process hit performance goals.

03

It typically takes 8-months for new employees to reach their full potential.

04

Most organizations only focus on one week of onboarding.

05

22% of all businesses have no formal onboading process.

06

The average onboarding process comprises 54 activities.

07

32.8% of new employees look for new job opportunities within 6 months.

08

The organizations replacement cost of an employee leaving within the first year is estimated at 207% of their first year salary.

09

62% of fortune 500 organizations rate new employee integration into corporate culture as their #1 priority.

10

73% of fortune 500 organizations identified corporate inconsistency & conflicting priorities as their biggest onboarding challenge.

ONBOARDING MINDSET
Designing a Remarkable Experience

If you want to design and build an aircraft you need to understand the principles of flight, such as Bernoulli's principle. The same is true for designing an onboarding experience.

The Onboarding Mindset is a collection of ten onboarding design principles that will help you work through the complexities of the modern onboarding experience – from key considerations to driving bottom line results.

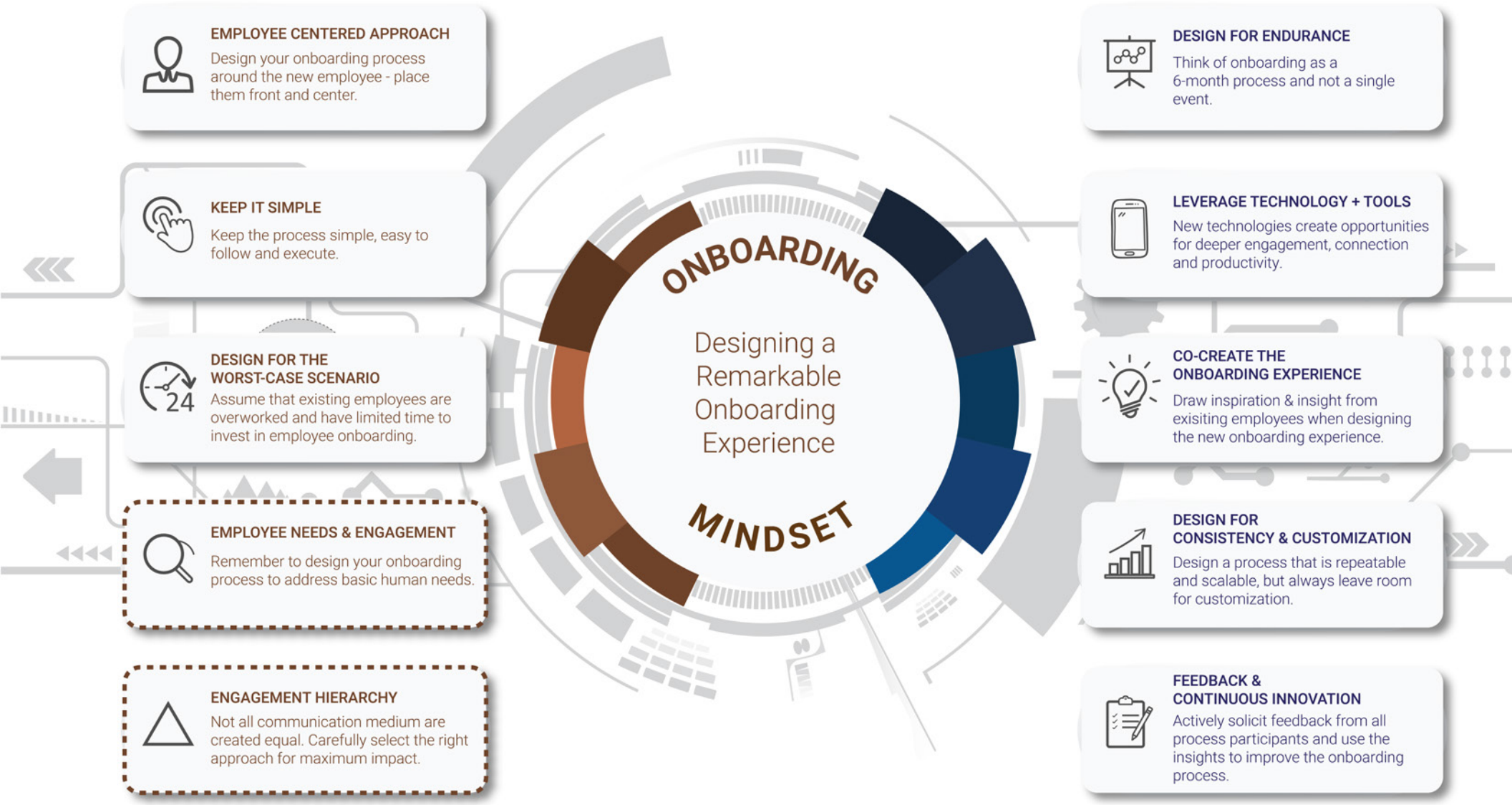
This visual guide expands upon the pivotal principle of **employee engagement** as it disproportionately impacts the success of onboarding.

We visually explore employee engagement through two additional illustrations, namely:

- Employee needs - how engagement impacts needs
- Engagement hierarchy - communication methods for better engagement

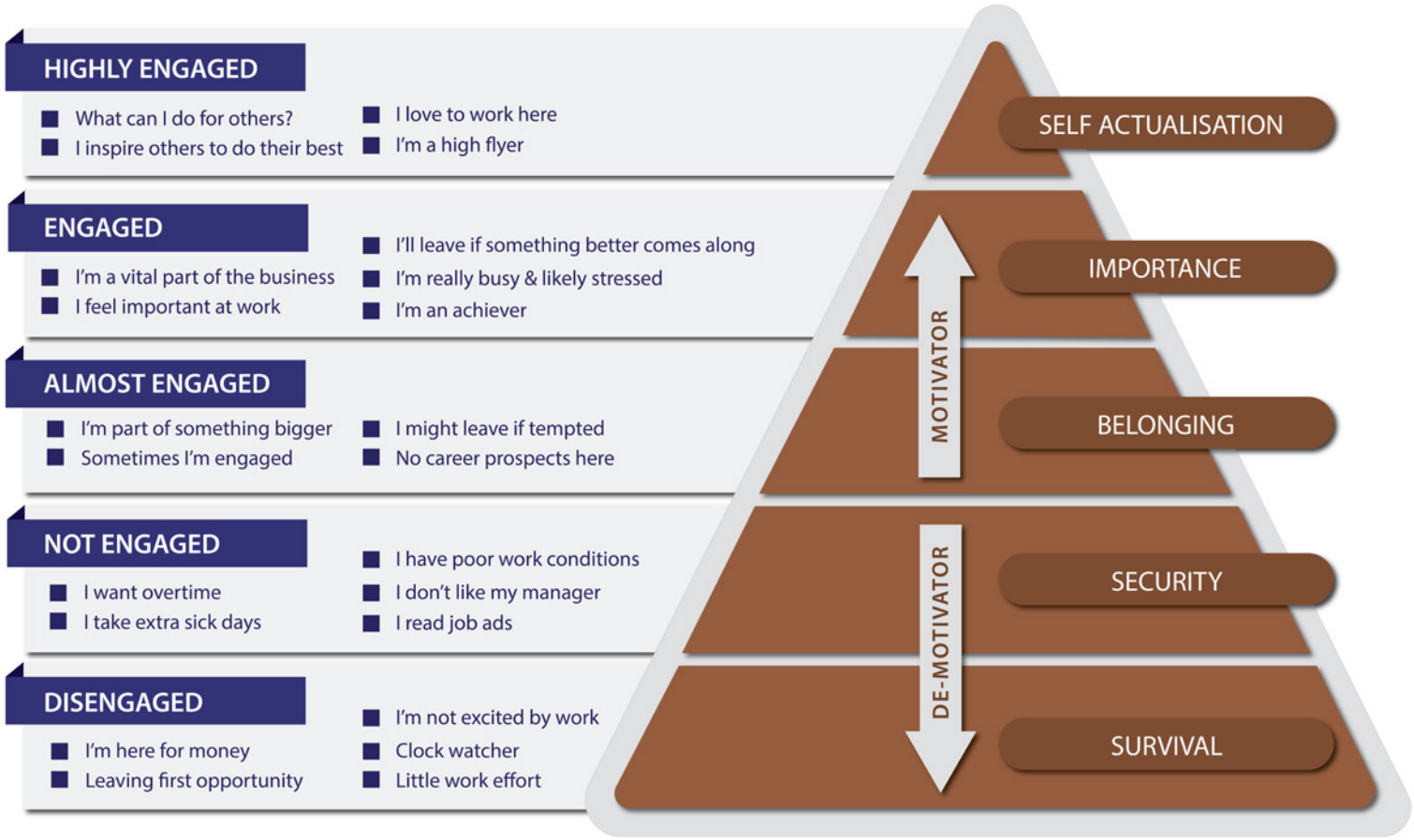
Keeping the principle of employee engagement at the heart of your design thinking will help deliver benefits that permeate throughout the organization. The better we engage the new employee, the greater their affiliation and integration into the organization.

Ultimately, engagement leads to improved long-term performance.


EMPLOYEE CENTERED APPROACH
Design your onboarding process around the new employee - place them front and center.
KEEP IT SIMPLE
Keep the process simple, easy to follow and execute.
DESIGN FOR THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO
Assume that existing employees are overworked and have limited time to invest in employee onboarding.
EMPLOYEE NEEDS & ENGAGEMENT
Remember to design your onboarding process to address basic human needs.
ENGAGEMENT HIERARCHY
Not all communication medium are created equal. Carefully select the right approach for maximum impact.
ONBOARDING
Designing a Remarkable Onboarding Experience
MINDSET
DESIGN FOR ENDURANCE
Think of onboarding as a 6-month process and not a single event.
LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY + TOOLS
New technologies create opportunities for deeper engagement, connection and productivity.
CO-CREATE THE ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE
Draw inspiration & insight from exisiting employees when designing the new onboarding experience.
DESIGN FOR CONSISTENCY & CUSTOMIZATION
Design a process that is repeatable and scalable, but always leave room for customization.
FEEDBACK & CONTINUOUS INNOVATION
Actively solicit feedback from all process participants and use the insights to improve the onboarding process.

EMPLOYEE NEEDS (MASLOW'S HIERARCHY)

HOW ENGAGEMENT IMPACTS NEEDS

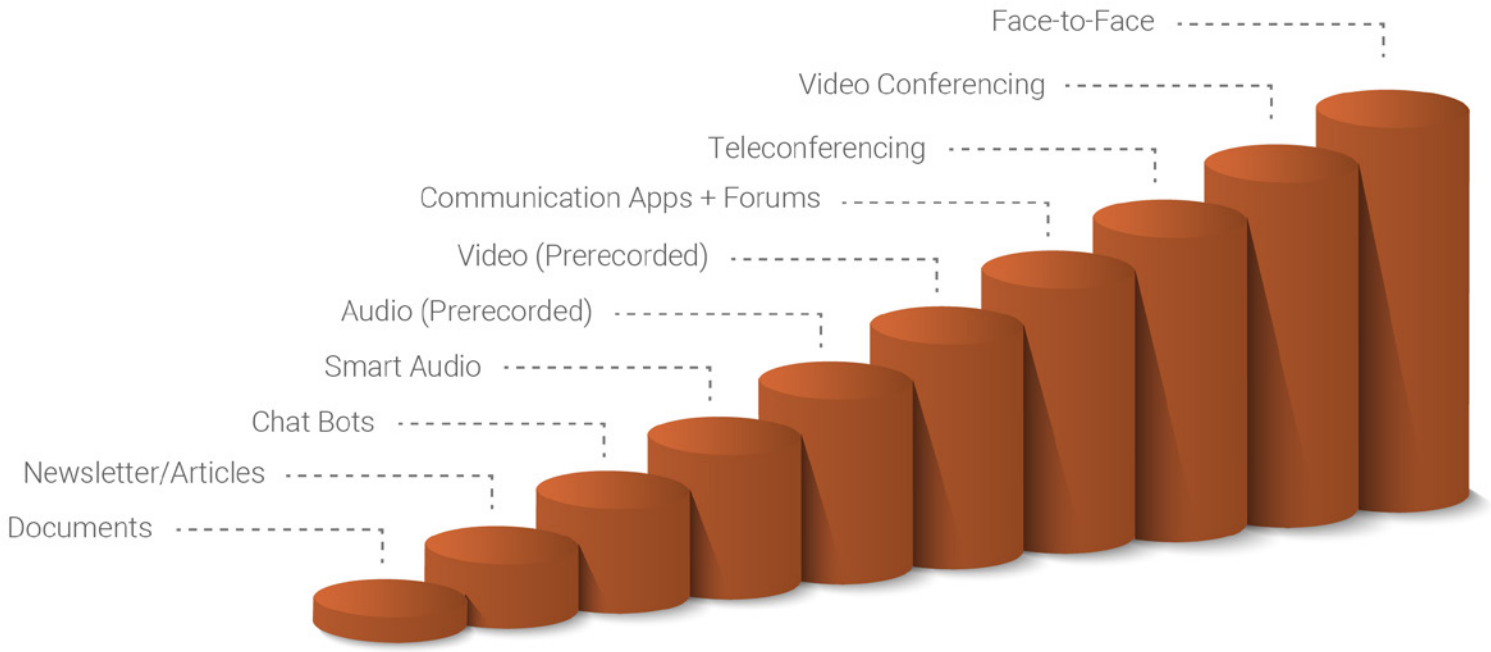


Using the Employee Needs Hierarchy as a guide, we should do our best to tie individual onboarding activities back to motivators - namely belonging, importance and self-actualization.

For example: by clearly articulating or demonstrating the significance of the employees role within the larger organization we are likely to elicit feelings of belonging and importance.

ENGAGEMENT HIERARCHY

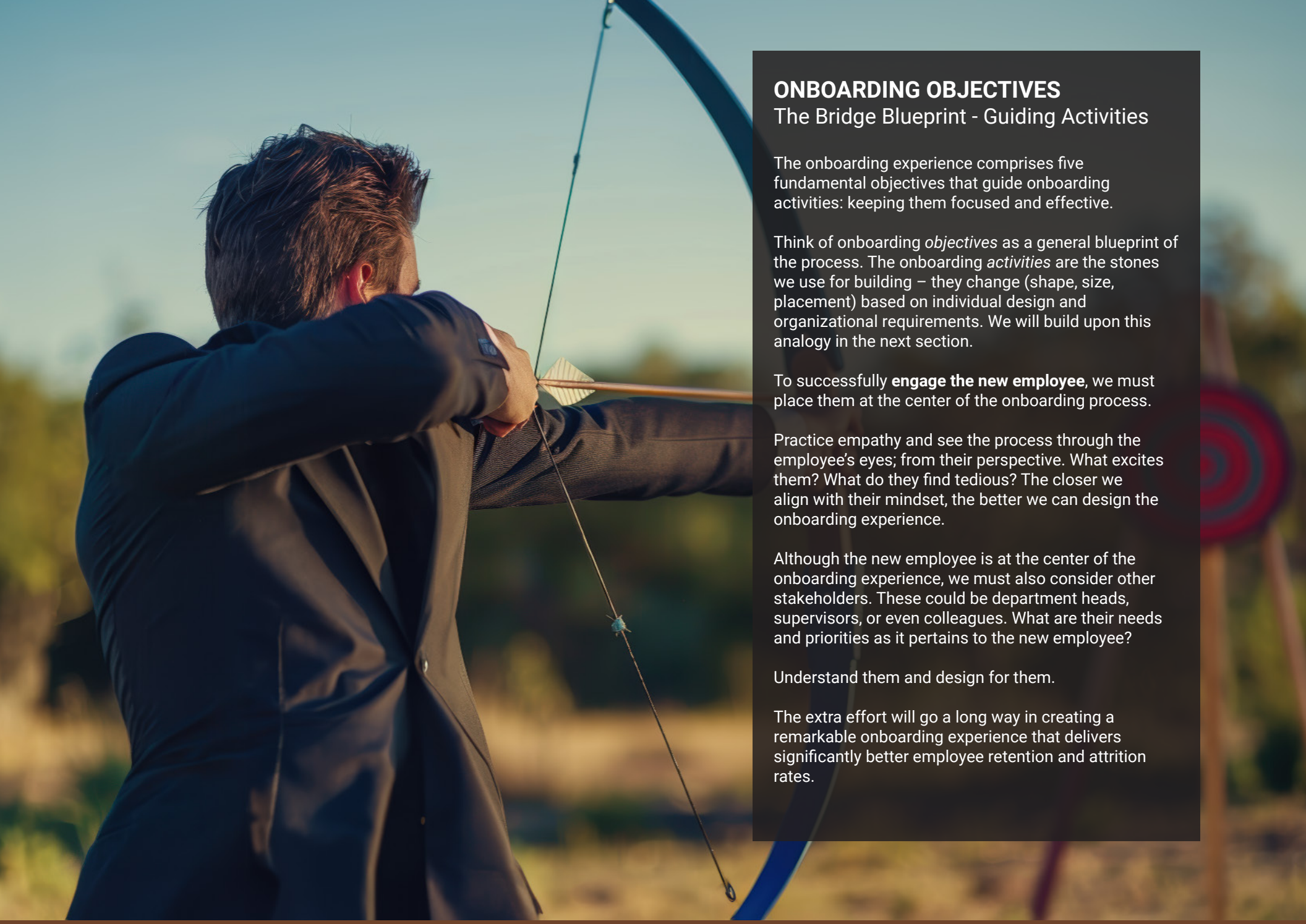
COMMUNICATION METHODS FOR BETTER ENGAGEMENT



A few things to keep in mind when deciding how best to communicate with new employees throughout the onboarding process. Although face-to-face is the most engaging form of communication, it may not always be the optimal approach, especially in a remote or hybrid onboarding scenarios.

Begin with your objectives. What are you looking to achieve at a particular touch point. For example, if you're covering the history, vision and culture of your 100-year old organization - a video format may serve you and the employee best. If a lot of questions are expected or your objective is to develop a deeper bond - then video conferencing is ideal.

Other considerations include scalability, context, time constraints, employee learning styles, and level of required engagement.



ONBOARDING OBJECTIVES

The Bridge Blueprint - Guiding Activities

The onboarding experience comprises five fundamental objectives that guide onboarding activities: keeping them focused and effective.

Think of onboarding *objectives* as a general blueprint of the process. The onboarding *activities* are the stones we use for building – they change (shape, size, placement) based on individual design and organizational requirements. We will build upon this analogy in the next section.

To successfully **engage the new employee**, we must place them at the center of the onboarding process.

Practice empathy and see the process through the employee's eyes; from their perspective. What excites them? What do they find tedious? The closer we align with their mindset, the better we can design the onboarding experience.

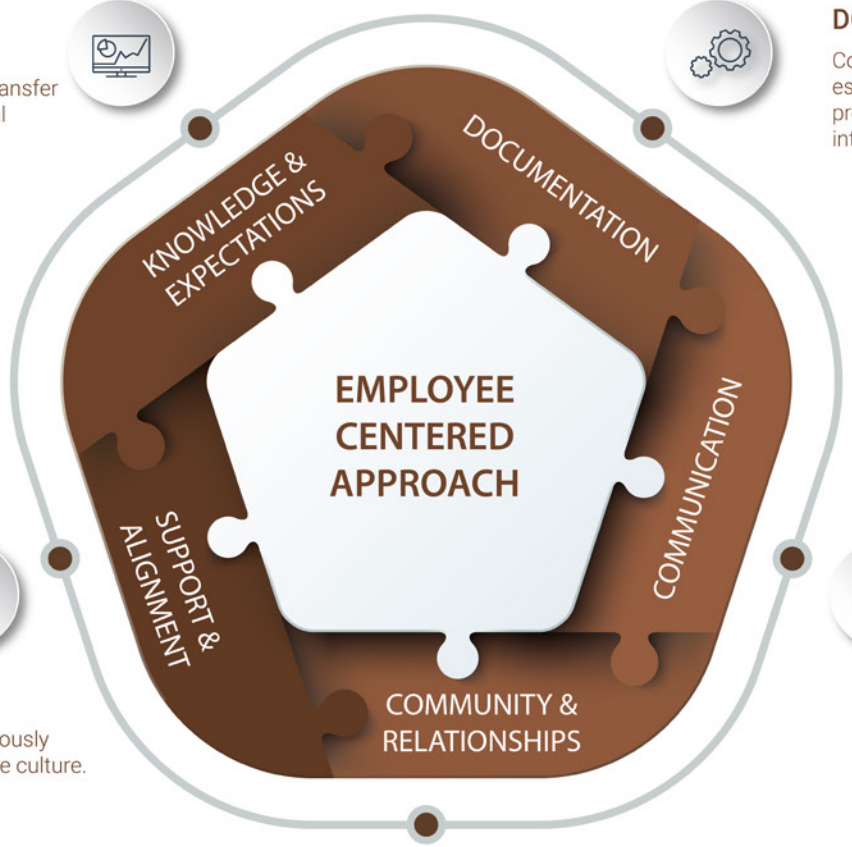
Although the new employee is at the center of the onboarding experience, we must also consider other stakeholders. These could be department heads, supervisors, or even colleagues. What are their needs and priorities as it pertains to the new employee?

Understand them and design for them.

The extra effort will go a long way in creating a remarkable onboarding experience that delivers significantly better employee retention and attrition rates.

ONBOARDING OBJECTIVES:
GUIDING ONBOARDING ACTIVITIES

People, Performance, Paperwork



KNOWLEDGE & EXPECTATIONS

Ensure corporate knowledge transfer happens and job-organizational expectations are understood.

DOCUMENTATION

Completing documentation is an essential part of the onboarding process. How can we make it interesting and even enjoyable

CORPORATE SUPPORT & CULTURAL ALIGNMENT

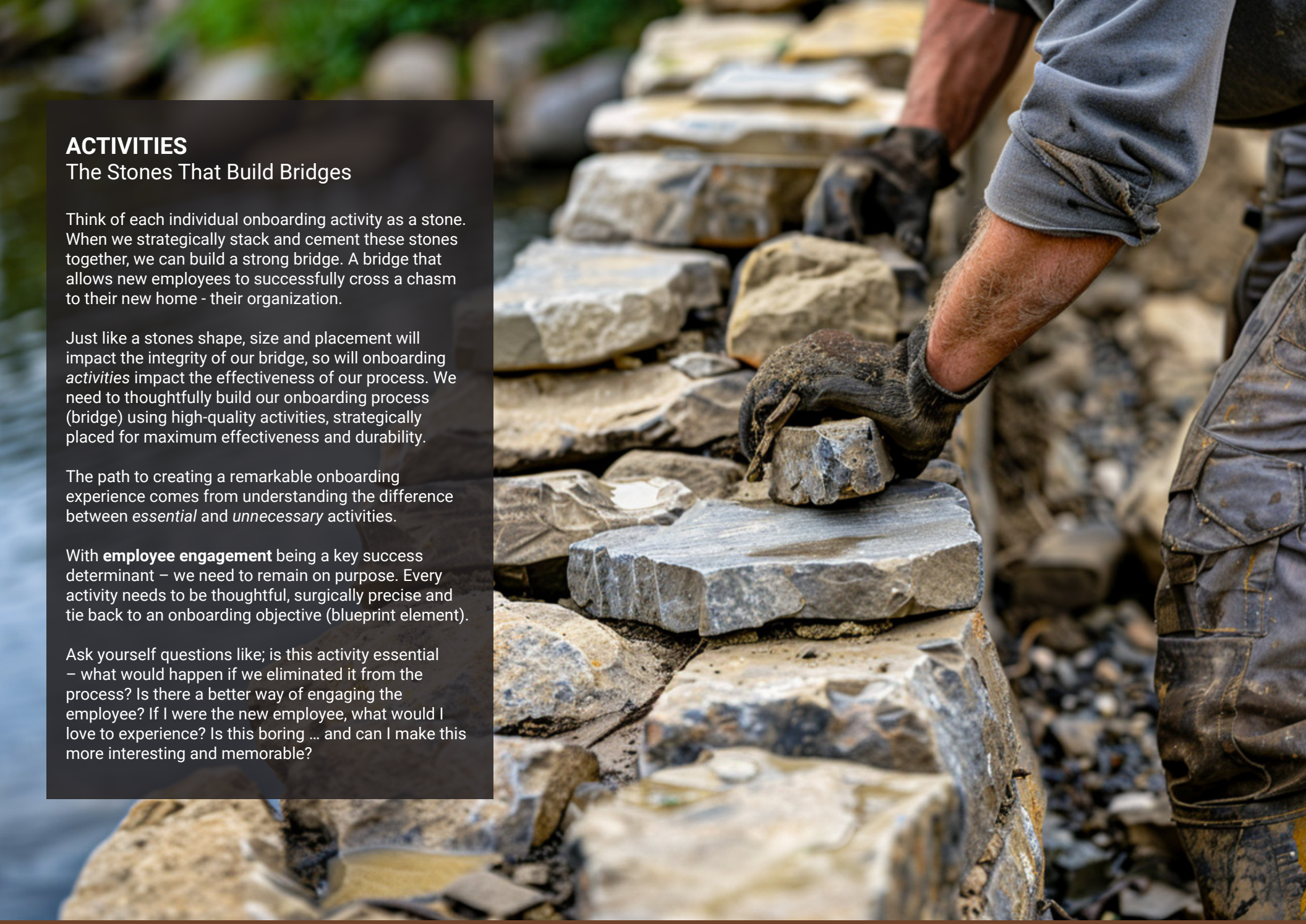
Successful onboarding requires corporate buy-in and support at all levels while simultaneously integrating the new employee into the corporate culture.

COMMUNICATION

Clear and consistent communication is key to onboarding success.

COMMUNITY & RELATIONSHIPS

Human beings want to belong and be a part of something bigger than themselves. We are social beings.



ACTIVITIES
The Stones That Build Bridges

Think of each individual onboarding activity as a stone. When we strategically stack and cement these stones together, we can build a strong bridge. A bridge that allows new employees to successfully cross a chasm to their new home - their organization.

Just like a stones shape, size and placement will impact the integrity of our bridge, so will onboarding *activities* impact the effectiveness of our process. We need to thoughtfully build our onboarding process (bridge) using high-quality activities, strategically placed for maximum effectiveness and durability.

The path to creating a remarkable onboarding experience comes from understanding the difference between *essential* and *unnecessary* activities.

With **employee engagement** being a key success determinant – we need to remain on purpose. Every activity needs to be thoughtful, surgically precise and tie back to an onboarding objective (blueprint element).

Ask yourself questions like; is this activity essential – what would happen if we eliminated it from the process? Is there a better way of engaging the employee? If I were the new employee, what would I love to experience? Is this boring … and can I make this more interesting and memorable?

ACTIVITIES: FEW GENERAL EXAMPLES DRIVING THE EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING PROCESS

*Onboarding **Objectives** (page 11) should guide your onboarding activity choices. There is no standard set of onboarding **activities** as they will vary based on numerous factors, including organizational and industry differences. The list below provides a few examples that will hopefully inspire your onboarding design process.*

PRE-ONBOARDING

- Send welcome email
- Send company swag bag
- Present first day schedule
- Identify key contact people (cheat sheet)
- Send a personalized video message from the team
- Share organizational handbook
- Prepare paperwork
- Approval: Employee paperwork
- Discuss role, goals and projects with supervisor
- Give access to any tools they will need
- Create accounts
- Assign required reading
- Prepare benefits package
- Provide a job description with responsibilities
- Order stationary if applicable
- Send out new employee announcement

FIRST DAY

- Welcome to the team
- Tour of the office
- Introduction to team
- Setup CEO introductory call
- Schedule employee manager call
- Explain company's mission, vision & values
- Review organizational structure
- Present industry overview
- Assign training material
- Discuss expectations
- Induct into company culture
- Assign a mentor
- Share company briefing sheet
- Setup employee workstation
- Schedule daily check-ins for first week

FIRST WEEK

- Team projects overview
- Assign first project
- Approval: First project
- Discuss expectations for the next month
- Conference call to review paperwork
- Discuss career development plan
- Schedule check-ins for next 90 days
- Training on internal software
- Schedule meetings with other departments
- Schedule FAQ team conference call
- One-on-one calls with team members

FIRST MONTH

- Plan check-in meetings
- Explain long-term goals
- Provide reading material for personal growth
- Set up conference calls with team members
- Review onboarding plan for next 60 days
- Conduct employee onboarding survey
- Conduct employee progress review
- Organize additional training as required
- Organize team meetups to encourage engagement and socialization

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