

Best Tips for Software Developer Onboarding

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In brief

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The software developer onboarding process doesn't have to be complicated and complex; you can build a plan of the most valuable things you should do and use them to fulfill your goal.

There are many effective ways to onboard new developers, and here we will see the most valuable ones. So let's get into it and see the best ways to do it.

The Developer Should Know the Big Picture

It doesn't matter if it is a new developer; you still can show them the big picture of what they are working on. Showing them more precisely what the result is, they will have a better picture of the main goals. Some companies show engineers how customers use most of what they have created. For example, show them why something is very important to your company and help achieve the next goal. They will understand, but this also creates motivation since the visualization of it makes it more precise.

Some companies show new developers and engineers recording sessions of how their customers use the platform. Also, it gives customers feedback to read to understand and see what the bigger picture is through the user's eyes. When you provide them with this knowledge right away, they will know the main priorities.

Show Them Appreciation

The biggest misconception about onboarding developers is that they shouldn't get a lot of praise because they are new. This is entirely untrue, and in fact, it should be quite the opposite. Because they are new, you should build trust and make them confident by recognizing any success they make. Don't forget that when an employee is new and still isn't 100% adjusted to all the requirements, they need time to adapt thoroughly. That is why you must motivate them by showing that you noticed they finished a task and finished their assignment.

It is nice to do this one-on-one, but an even better way to show appreciation is to do it in front of their new colleagues. Everyone likes to receive an "applause" for what they are doing, which will also build trust among all colleagues step by step. When everyone from the team cheers the new person, both sides will feel satisfied. Don't forget that you once were a beginner or started working in a new environment and felt the need to get some praise for a well-done job. It is the same with every new developer and software engineer; they will be grateful for it.

Give Them Access to Training

Most of the best companies do not expect a new junior software engineer to know and be fluent in its back-end code when they begin working. Instead, a smart move is to hire a person with the driving force and critical thinking skills to work in a team. If they have these skills, they will learn the more complicated technical parts over time.

You can even give them video tutorials to learn coding languages. Even better, you can use it as a learning and team-building tool by gathering more new employees and playing them training videos about learning to code, and giving them the chance to talk to one another. Something similar can also be made for senior developers only with a shorter time since they are already ahead in the learning process. Of course, you can set a time limit for everyone when you want them to learn something.

For example, six weeks for junior developers and three weeks for senior developers. You can decide your timing by considering the difficulty of what has to be learned. But always give them access to training, it is good for them which means it is good for you and the company. Nobody is born knowing everything.

Fixing Bugs Is Valuable for Beginners

Software engineering onboarding sounds like something that has to be complicated. This also is not true at all; it depends on where you start. To make the new engineers learn your system fast, you can give them the chance to fix bugs on their first project. By making this their first project, they will learn everything from codebase to domain area and everything in between about your whole system.

This doesn't mean that you should completely separate newbies to fix bugs and senior devs to write code. Of course, they should communicate and make it a working environment where juniors will learn new things and improve their skills, but this is a good way to start the process.

It is also suitable for building trust because when a junior completes some task, they can give it to a senior to review the results, and this will make them work and communicate better and get to know each other. So by doing this, you will manage to achieve two of the essential things when onboarding someone, you will make them feel comfortable and learn new things, be productive and bring original ideas to the table.

Mentor and Communicate

Last but not least, one of the most important parts is the mix of mentoring and communication because it is the perfect mix of guiding a new developer through the process. First and foremost, this doesn't mean you have to boss around and tell them what to do all the time. Instead, it must be more of a mentoring relationship which will also improve the communication you have.

Always remember that the result and biggest priority is to produce great results. To achieve this, it is important to have a good relationship, and by being a good mentor, both sides, the employee and the company, will benefit from it. Many companies realized that this is a much better formula to use rather than having big authority figures.

Of course, there must be a certain level of professionalism and authority, and you must let them know when they are making a mistake and give them feedback. But, in essence, this way of working is much more productive and at the end that is the most vital thing. The goal is to become better, and if possible, all the time. Otherwise, you won't have a nice working flow environment, and that will create problems constantly.

Final Words

Here you have some of the best tips for software developers and engineers onboarding. This process is both important and valuable for you and the company and the new employee, no matter how experienced they are. Use these tips when onboarding new workers and try to achieve an easy adjustment process, which will make the new person on your team productive in a short amount of time. And don't forget, the point is to make everyone enjoy what they are doing, giving excellent results and making the company better.

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