

4 Best Practices for Successfully Onboarding New Members

A new member's first weeks represent a critical time for your organization to drive engagement, demonstrate value and gain buy-in for your mission. Onboarding is your best chance to personalize your association to your new members and connect with them – from day one.

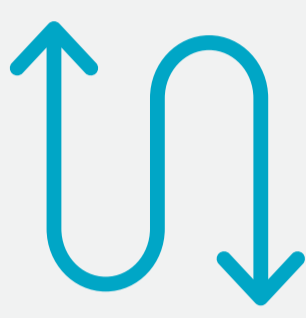
Done right, member onboarding is the first step in a long journey for members, one where they continue to connect with your organization and with each other to create lasting, meaningful relationships. It's critical to take the time to make a good first impression, ensure they're informed, share your impact and keep them involved.

Here are some simple steps to help you create a process that achieves your goals and helps you grow a passionate, committed and highly active member base.



First, let's tackle a few myths.

Great onboarding is not...



A linear path.
Every member is different.

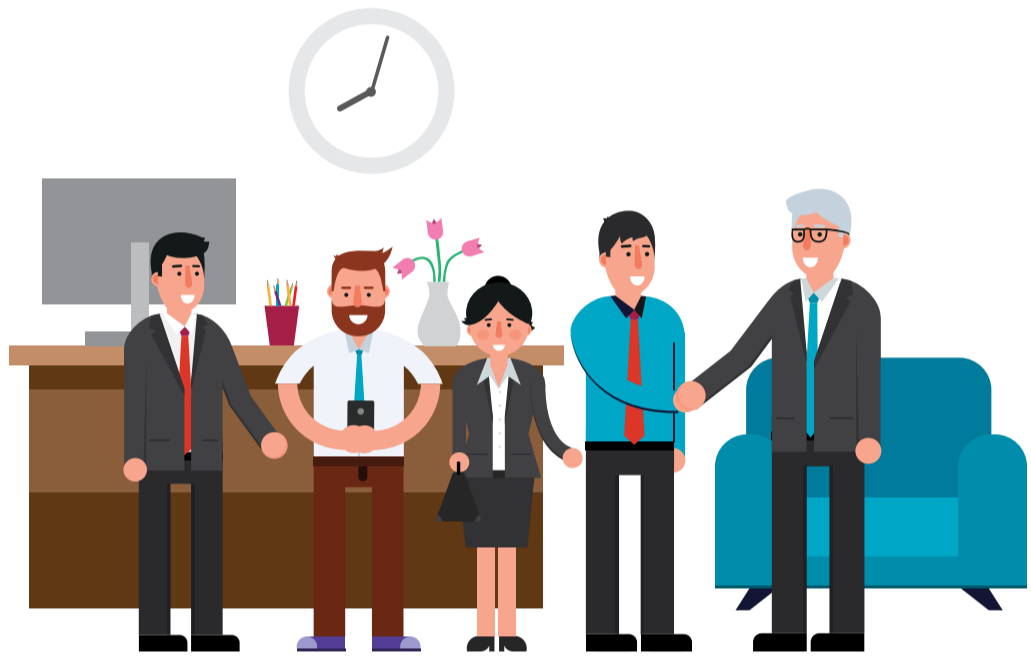


One size fits all.
What motivates some won't work for others.



Set and forget.
To drive engagement, you must also be engaged.

Now, let's take a look at the steps to a powerful onboarding process.



WELCOME MEMBERS: Getting started

The first step? Personalize, personalize, personalize! Take time to understand who your members are, including their interests, so you know who you're talking to.

This allows you to highlight the most relevant engagement opportunities and show that you care about what's important to them. Align with members from their first interactions to help them start internalizing the value of your organization.

DEMONSTRATE VALUE & GAIN BUY-IN: Remind them why they're here

New association members are riding a wave of enthusiasm about your mission. Like someone arriving at a party, they're excited and ready to get involved. But, getting started and staying involved can be challenging. Be sure to engage them up front with a variety of opportunities such as providing an online community for new members, create interactive tutorials to help them navigate your site and identify ways they can get involved right now.



Did you know?

55% of people say networking with others in the field is the top reason they join an organization.¹



ENCOURAGE NEXT STEPS: Leading the way

Make your organization part of their everyday online habit by always providing new ways to participate.

Share examples of how other members are getting involved across all of your digital properties, inspire action by making suggestions and send reminder emails to members who haven't engaged online or attended an event in a few weeks.

Did you know?

31% of association non-volunteers listed "no one had asked them" as a reason for not getting involved.² Don't miss out on a chance to engage a new member—ask them to attend an event, volunteer or share your mission with others.

ANALYZE AND OPTIMIZE: Improving the experience for future new members

You'll want to make adjustments to your onboarding process as you go along to ensure that you're delivering the best possible experience for new members and encouraging them to get involved and stay active in your organization.

Most changes to an onboarding program don't require big dollars – they require thinking, clear messaging, resources (staff or volunteer!) and a plan of action to put them in place. Review your member data regularly to understand where new members are in the onboarding process and what types of content they're engaging with the most.



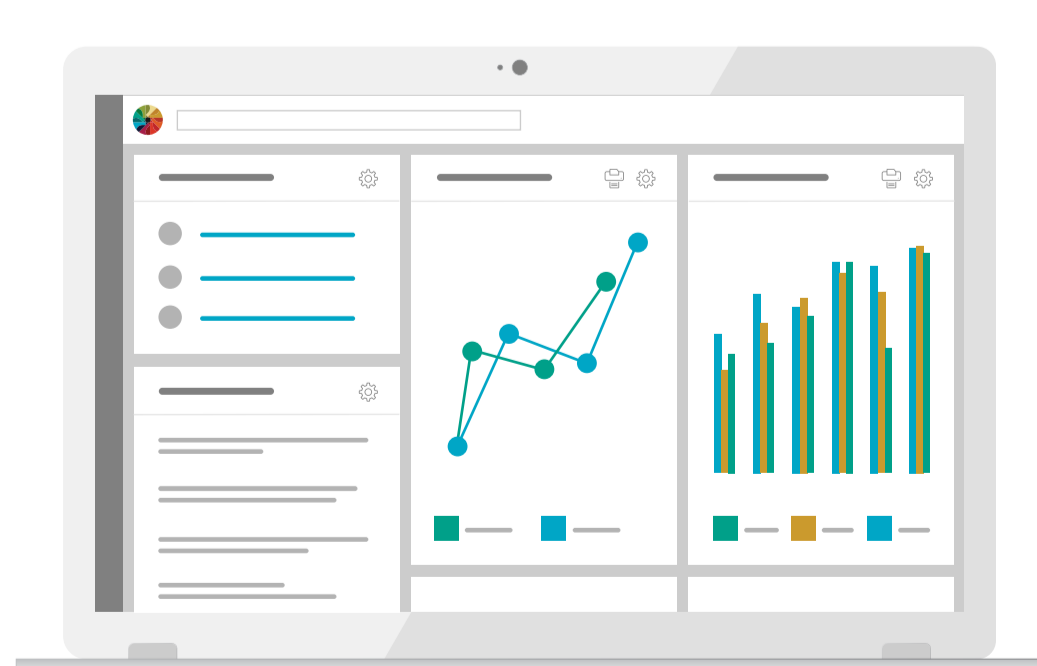
Did you know?

Out of 205 associations surveyed in 2018, the average membership retention rate was **84%**³

PRO TIP: Data visualization enables you to quickly identify areas of opportunity at-a-glance.

It can also help you...

- Segment member contact lists for better email personalization
- Identify when new member engagement tapers off
- Learn which programs or types of content are most effective



Building a successful onboarding process isn't something you can accomplish overnight. It takes time, dedication and access to data that helps you make better decisions on how to engage members.

Ready to learn more about how you can engage new members and deliver more value to them?

[Contact Us](#)

SOURCES:

¹ Marketing General, "The 2017 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report," 2017. <http://marketing.marketinggeneral.com/action/attachment/6893/1-0061/1/-/-/-/The%202017%20Membership%20Marketing%20Benchmarking%20Report.pdf>
² ASAE Foundation, "Mutually Beneficial Volunteerism: Opportunities for Enhancing Association Volunteer Management Systems," 2017. <https://www.asaecenter.org/publications/109027-mutually-beneficial-volunteerism-opportunities-for-enhancing-association-volunteer-management-opportunities>
³ ASAE Foundation, "Benchmarking in Association Management: 2018 Policies and Procedures, Vol 1, ASAE," 2018.