

Master's thesis

Master of Business Administration, Project Management

2023

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Developing the employee onboarding processes of Lumoame Ltd



Master's Thesis | Abstract

Turku University of Applied Sciences

Master of Business Administration, Project Management

2023 | Number of pages 56

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Developing the employee onboarding processes of Lumoame Ltd

Employee onboarding is an important aspect of Strategic Human Resource Management. It is an essential success factor of a company and has a significant impact to business results.

The goal of this thesis is to help a Finnish SaaS company Lumoame Ltd to develop their employee onboarding processes by finding out what is good and structured employee onboarding, why is it important for a company, and what should Lumoame Ltd do to improve their employee onboarding processes?

The research of this thesis is based on literature research about the topic, and a mixed method survey that explores the onboarding experiences and improvement ideas of the employees of Lumoame Ltd. The main findings highlight the importance of a clear and structured onboarding plan, clarity of role and expectations, support inside the company, and knowing and getting inside the company culture.

A project plan for developing the employee onboarding processes was made as an outcome of this thesis for Lumoame Ltd.

Keywords:

Employee, Onboarding, Human Resource Management, Success Factors, Process Development

Opinnäytetyö (YAMK) | Tiivistelmä

Turun ammattikorkeakoulu

Tradenomi (ylempi AMK), projektijohtaminen

2023 | 56 sivua

Essi Lustre

Lumoame Oy:n työntekijän perehdytysprosessien kehittäminen

Työntekijän perehdyttäminen on strategisen henkilöstöjohtamisen tärkeä näkökulma. Se on yrityksen keskeinen menestystekijä, ja sillä on merkittävä vaikutus yrityksen tulokseen.

Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on auttaa suomalaista SaaS-yritystä Lumoame Oy:tä kehittämään työntekijöiden perehdytysprosesseja selvittämällä, mitä on hyvä ja järjestelmällinen työntekijän perehdyttäminen, miksi se on yritykselle tärkeää, ja mitä Lumoame Oy:n tulisi tehdä kehittääkseen työntekijän perehdyttämisprosessejaan.

Tämän opinnäytetyön tutkimus perustuu aiheeseen liittyvään kirjallisuustutkimukseen sekä yhdistelmämenetelmällä toteutettuun kyselytutkimukseen, joka selvittää Lumoame Oy:n työntekijöiden kokemuksia heidän perehdytyksestään ja kehitysideoitaan perehdyttämisen kehittämiseksi. Tutkimuksen tuloksissa korostuu selkeän ja järjestelmällisen perehdytys suunnitelman, roolin ja odotusten selkeyden, yrityksen sisäisen tuen, sekä yrityskulttuurin tuntemisen ja sisälle pääsemisen tärkeys.

Tämän opinnäytetyön tuotoksena toteutettiin Lumoame Oy:lle projektisuunnitelma työntekijän perehdyttämisen prosessien kehittämiseen.

Asiasanat:

Työntekijä, perehdyttäminen, henkilöstöjohtaminen, menestystekijät, prosessien kehittäminen

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Employee onboarding is now more important to organizations than ever. The Forbes article “Is onboarding the new HR secret for company success?” written by Bruce Rogers (2019) is talking about the importance of the subject. Rogers is interviewing Co-founder and Consulting Director of Onboarding Group and author Christian Harpelund in the article. Harpelund states that employees want to feel connected and onboarded with the company or they will leave for another opportunity somewhere else. For example, 25 percent of new hires leave their company within the first 12 months and the cost of losing a new employee within 12 months equals two years of salary. Companies with structured and standardized onboarding processes experience 54 percent higher productivity from their newly employed and twice as high level of engagement. A professional approach to onboarding will lead to faster time-to-time-performance, increased retention rates, higher employee engagement, reduced stress and sick days, and better employer brand and reputation. (Rogers 2019.)

This thesis is looking at employee onboarding from the point of view of the commissioner, a Finnish start-up SaaS (Software as a Service) company Lumoame Ltd. Lumoame Ltd provides a platform for analyzing different types of feedback. It was originally developed for analyzing customer feedback, but it can also be used to analyze for example employee experience feedback. The mission of Lumoame Ltd is to empower every employee in every organization to make the right decisions based on the voice of the customer. The business idea is based on the experience of the founders of the company, where they had noticed the need for being able to easily find the right actionable insights from the customer feedback, especially when the amount of feedback is so big, that it cannot be handled manually.

1.2 Goals and research problem

Lumoame Ltd had already some onboarding processes and materials before the thesis. There were some materials for the general company onboarding and then different teams had some of their own materials for role specific onboarding. However, there were no clear processes for employee onboarding and the onboarding experience was not equal to every employee. The company was growing, and new employees were hired frequently, so improving and creating structured onboarding processes and materials was essential for the company. Therefore, the subject of this thesis was chosen.

The main goal and the outcome of this thesis is to prepare a project plan for Lumoame Ltd to improve and develop the employee onboarding processes for the company. This plan is based on existing research, literature, and theories about how to achieve best results with employee onboarding, as well as the experiences, feedback, and development ideas of the employees of the company.

This thesis answers to the following research questions:

- Why is good and structured employee onboarding important for a company?
- What does a good and structured employee onboarding mean?
- What are the actions Lumoame Ltd should take to improve their employee onboarding processes?

The beginning of the thesis is based on literature research. It covers the basics of Human Resource Management and employee onboarding. There are some theories for employee onboarding presented and best practices in building well-structured onboarding programs and achieving good onboarding experiences. The best practices have been collected from different sources to find different point of views for employee onboarding and similarities between different sources and experiences.

1.3 The research methods used in this thesis

Research can be seen to be either quantitative or qualitative. The term quantitative research is used for a data collection technique or way of analyzing data that generates or uses numerical data, whereas a data collection technique or a way of analyzing data that generates or uses non-numerical data is referred as qualitative research. Differentiating this methodological choice can be problematic because in many cases it is relevant to combine elements from both methods. An example of this is to use a questionnaire that includes open questions where the respondents can write things in their own words. When quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated in the same research project, it can be referred as mixed methods research. (Saunders et al. 2019, 175-176.)

Questionnaires are widely used in business and management research. It is referred when the same set of questions is asked from each respondent in a predetermined order. A questionnaire is an effective way of collecting responses when the audience is large. The most important things to consider when a questionnaire is designed are the design of the individual questions, good visual presentation, presenting the purpose of the questionnaire, testing, and well planned and executed delivery and return of the data. (Saunders et al. 2019, 503-505.)

Mixed methods research is used in this thesis and the data collection was executed with a web survey. The survey was completed by the respondents, so it can be referred as a self-completed questionnaire and in this case, we can talk about a survey rather than a questionnaire (Saunders et al. 2019, 505-506). The survey was done for the employees of Lumoame Ltd. The aim of the survey was to find out what kind of experiences the employees had had when they started to work at the company how would they improve the employee onboarding processes of the company.

To achieve a good response rate, the survey should not be too long, and the appearance should be easily readable and clear. The questions should be

easily understandable for the audience. Questions should be very precise and not too long. The survey form should move forward in a logic order and there should be clear guidelines about how to answer the questions. Questions can be asked as a single question with separate response options, or if for example the response options are the same, the questions can be asked as a series with mutual response options. The response options should be defined so that they exclude each other. (Tietoarkisto 2023.) In the research of this thesis, there was a structured digital survey form that was shared to the employees by email. The survey included questions with a grade and open-ended questions. More detailed description of the survey, the results and conclusions are presented in the chapter 3 and 4.

2 Employee onboarding

2.1 Onboarding as a strategic tool

2.1.1 Human resource management

Human resource management (HRM) is a centric field of management and a success factor of a company. The goal of HRM is that the company has the right number of employees doing the right things and executing the company goals and strategy with good performance. Good employee performance is based on competence, motivation, engagement, well-being, and good working conditions that are managed through different HRM practices. When HRM is seen particularly as a tool and enabler of implementing the business strategy, the term of strategic human resource management (SHRM) is also used. HR strategy can be part of the overall business strategy, or it can be a separate one, but the end goal should be the same. HR strategy is the link between the business strategy and HR practices. (Viitala 2021, 12-15.)

When talking about HRM, employees and their input for the company can be seen as the human resources or human capital of the company. This human capital has many different aspects, such as competence, well-being, motivation, management, organizational culture and atmosphere, employer image, creativity and innovativeness, engagement, and performance. All of these are objectives and outcomes of HRM and should be evaluated, treasured, and developed actively, systematically and with goal-oriented mindset. These aspects have an impact on each other, so it is good to understand that managing one aspect well can lead to positive outcomes on other aspects too. For example, having the right number of employees affects well-being, performance, atmosphere, and enables competence development. Atmosphere and organizational culture affect on how engaged the employees are to reaching common goals, how fast they learn and how their well-being is at work. Competence, well-being, motivation, atmosphere, and organizational culture

affect on creativity and innovativeness. Management is something that affects on all the aspects of human resources and can be seen as the most effective way to impact them. (Viitala 2021, 32-33, 46.)

2.1.2 Onboarding concept and strategic onboarding

Employee onboarding at some level is obligatory according to the law in Finland. The law is looking at onboarding from a point of view of the safety and health of the employee. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002, 10) in the legislation of Finland, the employer is responsible for the following things.

The employees receive sufficient orientation to the work, working conditions in the workplace, working methods and production methods, work equipment used at work and the correct method of using it, as well as to safe working practices, especially before the beginning of a new job or task or a change in duties, and before the introduction of new work equipment and new working methods or production methods.

This is the minimum level of onboarding that every organization in Finland must do. However, onboarding can be seen to be a much more multidimensional part of the organization.

Onboarding is the process of helping new hires adjust to social and performance aspects of their new jobs quickly and smoothly (Bauer 2010, 1). This is how Tayla N. Bauer defines onboarding of a new employee. Strategic onboarding is the most relevant way to improve the effectiveness of organizations' talent management. To be able to successfully contribute to the firm's mission, the new hires need to feel welcome and prepared for their jobs as fast as possible. Every company has its own ways to make the new hires learn the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are required to work effectively. This can also be referred to organizational socialization. Onboarding should be a seamless process where different HRM functions work together in a coordinated way. Onboarding starts with recruitment where the valued behaviors are identified and sought. After recruitment onboarding is co-operation between orientation forums, support

tools and processes, coaching and support from management, trainings, and feedback tools. (Bauer 2010, 1, 8.)

The aim of good employee onboarding is to enable employees to perform and provide value to the organization. Onboarding should not just mean a checklist, an information package, or an introduction program. It should be seen as a much wider, well-structured and proactively approached process. (Rogers 2019.) Onboarding is often mixed with orientation. Orientation can be seen as the necessary paperwork and other routine tasks that must be completed when a new employee starts. (Little 2019). Onboarding should be seen as a long-term comprehensive process which lays a foundation for success of both the employee and the employer. When onboarding is done well starting from the beginning, it can help the employee to become productive and successful in the early days of their career and improve loyalty and engagement towards the organization. (SHRM 2022.)

2.2 Onboarding theories

2.2.1 The Four Cs

Organizations differ with the level of the formality of their onboarding processes. The organizations that have more formal processes for onboarding employees usually succeed better than the ones with more informal practices. The Four Cs of onboarding refer to the building blocks for reaching the different levels of onboarding. The building blocks are compliance, clarification, culture and connection. The picture 1 is showing the correlation between different onboarding strategy levels and building blocks. (Bauer 2010, 2.)

Onboarding Strategy Level	Compliance	Clarification	Culture	Connection
1 Passive	YES	SOME	LITTLE/ NONE	LITTLE/ NONE
2 High Potential	YES	YES	SOME	SOME
3 Proactive	YES	YES	YES	YES

Picture 1. Correlation between onboarding strategy levels and the building blocks (the Four C's) (Bauer 2010, 3).

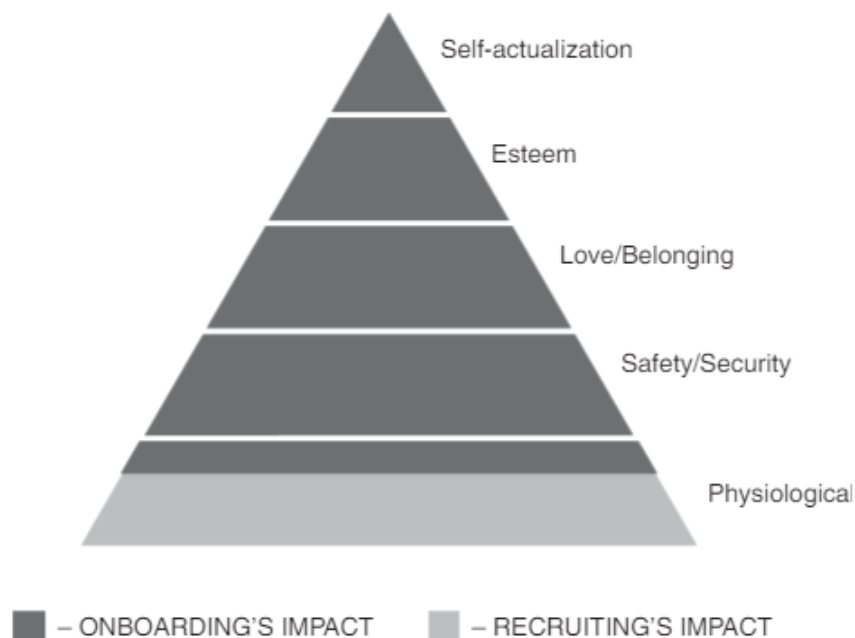
Compliance is the lowest level of the building blocks where only the legal and policy related rules and regulations are thought to the employee. Clarification refers to when the employee understands the new job and the expectations that the organization has for that job. Culture means for the employee to have a sense of the unformal and formal organizational norms. On the highest level of connection, the new employee establishes the vital interpersonal relationships and information networks. With these building blocks organizations can create high level onboarding processes. (Bauer 2010, 2.)

The Onboarding Strategy Levels refer to the degree of how the building blocks are covered in the onboarding programs of the organization. The first level of Passive onboarding is usually covered naturally. There might be some clarity on the role, but there are no formal ways of guiding new employees regarding culture and connection. On this level onboarding is unsystematic process with unrelated tasks to be completed. On the second level of High Potential onboarding there are formal practices to cover compliance and clarification and there are some mechanisms for culture and connection. There are good and systematic processes, but they haven't been implemented across the organization in a systematic way. Third level of Proactive onboarding is reached when all the building blocks are addressed formally. The onboarding is

organized systematically with a strategic human resource management approach. (Bauer 2010, 2-4.)

2.2.2 The Hierarchy of Needs

Looking closer to employees' needs and the ability to meet those needs with strategic onboarding, Stein & Christiansen (2010) have used A Theory of Human Motivation by Abraham Maslow as a tool to understand this better. The theory is based on a pyramid figure (picture 2) with different levels for different human needs: physiological, safety/security, love/belonging, esteem and self-actualization. The idea of the pyramid figure is that to be able to pay attention to the next level of needs, people need to feel satisfied with the previous level starting from the bottom. This theory helps to understand the employee onboarding process from the point of view of the employee's needs and how to best meet those needs with a well-structured and strategic onboarding process. (Stein & Christiansen 2010, 36.)



Picture 2. Potential of Recruiting and Onboarding to Satisfy Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Stein & Christensen 2010, 37).

The physiological needs of an employee can be seen as the financial compensation from the work that enables the employee to fulfill the basic human needs to survive, such as eating. This need is mostly met during the recruitment process where the employment is agreed on, but as it can be seen in the Picture 2, the onboarding process is where the company can assure that the needs of the employee are filled, and the employee wants to continue working in the company. (Stein & Christiansen 2010, 36-37.)

In the next level of the need to feel safe and secure in the job, the beginning of the onboarding plays a great role. For the employee to feel the needed level of security in the organization, they need to have the skills, knowledge, personal relationships, and cultural awareness to succeed in the job. This usually leads the employee to meet the next level of needs which is the love and belonging to the organization. When the employee performs well in their job, the people in the organization accept them as an important part of the organization and show it to the onboarding employee. This usually means that the employee stays in the organization and takes the organization's mission as their own. They feel safe to say what they really think and become appreciated for their unique qualities. (Stein & Christiansen 2010, 37-38.)

This again leads to the next level of esteem which is referred as self-esteem and respect of others. When the employee has the right skills, knows the culture of the organization, and has the chance to impress, they feel the self-worth in the organization. This can be achieved by offering the onboarding employee the tools to succeed from the early stages of the employment. It is also important to keep inspiring the onboarding employee to feel that they are excited to be a part of the organization's mission. This can be started during the recruitment, but it needs to be continued during the first year and beyond of the employment. If the expectations are stated high in the recruitment, but the first days of employment do not meet these needs, for example by spending the first days setting up working equipment and doing other administrative tasks, the inspiring feeling can already be lost with that. For the entry of the new employee in the organization to be inspiring and lead to a high level of productivity from the start,

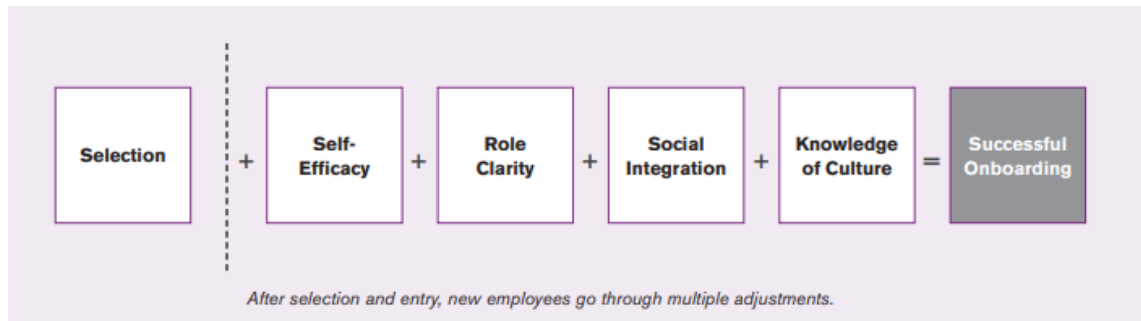
the organization needs to have a dynamic strategy in place for the onboarding process. (Stein & Christiansen 2010, 38.)

After the need of self-esteem has been fulfilled well, the onboarding employee can move to the next level of self-actualization. In the onboarding context this can be seen as being able to provide career paths and ways of self-development in the organization. This should be seen as an important part when planning the structured strategic onboarding paths, because this in time leads to the employee to feel that the organization can offer them a long-term career that meets the employee's unique needs and qualities. This usually leads to the employee to give more of themselves. The problem that is usually seen here is that companies are overpromising and under delivering against the needs of the employee, which leads to disappointment. Even though all the previous levels of needs would have been fulfilled but the company fails to make the employee feel that there is a strategically meaningful path for them in the organization, the employee might not feel committed in the long run. The employee usually makes this assumption during the first year of employment, so this should be included strongly in the onboarding plan from the very start of the employment and every plan should be made to meet each individual's unique needs. (Stein & Christiansen 2010, 38-40.)

2.3 Best practices and benefits of good onboarding

Bauer (2010, 4) introduces four levers of successful onboarding (picture 3) that can help to maximize onboarding success for new employees. The first lever of self-efficacy, or self-confidence, in job performance is when the employee feels confident that they are doing their job well. It has been shown that self-efficacy has an impact on commitment, satisfaction, and turnover of the employees of an organization so specific onboarding programs should be implemented for boosting this. The second lever is role clarity which means the employee's level of understanding about the role and expectations in their job. It has been shown that higher role clarity leads to higher performance and results so emphasizing and measuring role clarity from the early stages during the onboarding is

essential. You can very consistently predict the level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment by the measures of role clarity during onboarding. (Bauer 2010, 4-5.)



Picture 3. Levers of Successful Onboarding (Bauer 2010, 6).

The third lever of successful onboarding is social integration. This means meeting people, getting comfortable with working with other people in the organization, and getting the feeling of acceptance from the peers and supervisors. This is usually achieved with the combination of help from the organization and employee's own activity in building relationships. There is a positive relation between social integration and favorable onboarding outcomes, such as performance and job satisfaction that lead to higher commitment. Fourth lever is about knowledge of and fit within an organizational culture. To succeed in the employee adjustment during onboarding the new employee needs to get onboard with the organization's unique culture that includes different politics, goals, values, and the unique language of the firm. This again has been shown to have an impact on commitment, satisfaction, and turnover of the employees. (Bauer 2010, 5-6.)

Long-term outcomes of onboarding can have an effect to organization's results that are shown through the levels of retention rates, time to productivity, and customer satisfaction. When onboarding is executed in a way that it supports employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment, it can promote their success in accomplishing the goals of the organization. Therefore, onboarding can be seen to have a long-term impact to performance. Losing an employee who is not performing well can be a positive outcome, but losing an employee,

who has the potential to be a contributing member of an organization, is an ultimate failure of onboarding. This can occur when employees feel confused, detached, or the absence of confidence. In addition to higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, higher performance levels, and lower turnover, career effectiveness and lowered stress can be seen as long-term benefits of properly performed onboarding process. (Bauer 2010, 6.)

Research by Sharma & Stoll (2019, 12) is exploring the link between onboarding and turnover intention of new employees. The research is focused on IT professionals that have one of the highest levels of turnover intention compared to other industries. The research was done by using hypotheses based on theoretical models and comparing these hypotheses to onboarding success. The biggest correlation was found between support during onboarding and onboarding success. Support here means continuous activities and processes where a new employee has the support from senior colleagues and safe environment to ask questions without feeling embarrassed. Sharma & Stoll (2019, 12-13) refer to Bauer's (2010, 1) expression of "organizational socialization" and the research shows that support during onboarding is the key to achieving that. According to this research orientation and training had only modest associations with onboarding success and it is showing that orientation and training programs can be insubstantial compared to supporting environment in the organization.

In his blog article, Little (2019) talks about three keywords in onboarding process: acclimate, engage, and retain. Acclimating a new employee means that the new employee understands the specific goals and philosophies of the company. The employee needs to know the team and company goals and understand how they can help to achieve them in their role. It is also likely important for the new employee to be aware of what can they expect about the management, available resources, and reviews about performance. It has been shown that with engaged employees, companies can achieve better profitability, turnover rate, safety record, absenteeism, and product quality and customer ratings. Onboarding is a great opportunity for the company to start building the

engagement with showing good management and company's willingness for recognition of talent and supporting growth. Through engagement, a company can achieve to retain the hired professionals and save the high costs of having to start the recruitment process from the beginning again. (Little 2019.)

Little (2019) has listed some tips for successful onboarding experience:

- The key to good onboarding is well done planning that should start from the point when a decision to hire a new employee is made. This way the onboarding process can start already during recruitment and is in line with it.
- Written statement about the responsibilities and objectives of the new employee is something that should be available already during the recruitment so that there are no misunderstandings about it.
- All the current employees need to be informed about a new person and their role and responsibilities before the first day of a new employee, to make the new hire feel welcome from day one.
- To help the onboarding succeed it is good to have another employee to assist the new hire with onboarding as a peer role model.
- Manager's role is critical during onboarding and the new employee needs to get the feeling of being respected, valued, and appreciated starting from the beginning of the employment. Encouragement, reviewing the employee's progress and providing feedback are the core responsibilities of a manager during onboarding.
- Having a joint lunch event can be a good way to enable the new employee to socialize with the co-workers.
- For providing a good first day experience having the work area, equipment, and tools ready for the new employee is important. This can mean that the phone is functioning, computer is set up for working or the desk is clean. This should not be what the new employee spends time on during the first days.

- Getting feedback from the current employees about their onboarding experience is a good way of ensuring that the onboarding plan will have all the important things included.
- Creativeness can make onboarding more interesting, and you can for example use gamification during the process.

Salminen (2023) is also pointing out planning, involving other employees and following and evaluating as the key factors in successful onboarding. Written plan should include goals, responsibilities and following of onboarding process. It is also important to define clear and understandable tasks and goals for the specific role of a new employee as well as the support that is available. This will help the employee especially during the first months in a new job. Involving employees from different departments of the organization helps the new employee to socialize and get to know people in the organization and the fresh ideas from the new employee are also spread across the organization.

Heinonen (2018) points out the same thing of involving the employees in onboarding from the point of view that the person who knows best about the case, should be the one who is doing the onboarding and training. The big picture of the organization is something that the management can usually give best. The better the new employee understands and sees the big picture, the faster they can move forward with the onboarding.

Onboarding effects on psychological well-being in many ways. Being able to perform well in a job results the feeling of succeeding and believing in own capabilities. Good performance also leads to good feedback and acceptance from others in the organization. These outcomes make it easier for the new employee to build good relationships inside the organization and enrich the confidence and enthusiasm to develop as an employee. In addition to psychological impacts, less stress factors in the beginning of a new job also effects on physical well-being. (Viitala 2021, 83.)

To be able to follow up and evaluate the onboarding process, there should be a plan for the needed resources to do this and clear milestones that can be evaluated and measured. Understanding the new employee's expectations,

including common work life skills to onboarding and acknowledging other possible special skills and ideas of the new employee can make the onboarding even more successful. (Salminen 2023.) The problem with executing the onboarding plan and doing the follow ups and measuring success is usually that it should be done in addition to the other work and there is not enough time. Good planning, even if it is a simple check list, will help with this problem. (Heinonen 2018.) According to research done by Brik, managers use only an average of 20 percent of their work time for human resource management and most of this time to administrative tasks (Salminen 2023). Salminen (2023) states that onboarding is an underestimated management task, and it suffers from the lack of time of the managers.

Gabsa (2018) is referring how important it is to treat your employees as well as your customers in fulfilling expectations and needs about the brand of the company. As with customers companies aim to create great experiences that reflect the identity of the company, it is likely important with onboarding employees. Engaged employees can be seen as brand champions of the company that will represent the brand of the company to the customers and potential new employees. There are three crucial factors that need to be fulfilled to make this happen:

- The employees need to know what makes the company unique.
- The employees need to know exactly how their job helps to fulfill the company's mission or purpose.
- The employees need to experience the company's brand, mission, and values during onboarding.

With strategically lead strong focus on the feelings and experiences of the new hires and employees overall, a company can create engaged brand loyal employees that are likely to promote the company to others. (Gapsa 2018.)

3 Research on improving and developing the employee onboarding processes

3.1 Existing processes and materials

Before this thesis Lumoame Ltd had some general company onboarding materials existing. There were Power Point slides that included support material to go through the company story, mission, vision, values, main company KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), product introduction, positioning in the market, customer logos, and organizational structure. There was also another slide set that covered the common working tools and practicalities such as healthcare and salary payment. These materials were something that should be introduced to all the new employees during the first days of employment. There was also a draft of a Lumoa Handbook that collected all the relevant general information together for a new employee.

The company was using an HR system where the employee information was stored. The system was used to record basic employee information, absence and attendance information, and employment related attachments such as tax cards. There were some functionalities and possibilities in terms of onboarding that were not used before the thesis, such as recording the onboarding plan with follow-ups. The HR system provider had also their own onboarding check list available.

In addition to the general company materials, different teams had their own onboarding materials and processes for the role specific onboarding. These materials and processes were not in common knowledge of the company and the processes and materials were all separate and different from each other. There was very little synergy used where the different teams could share and use each other's resources to complement the onboarding plans and materials. Having introductions to other teams' responsibilities and goals was mostly under the responsibility of the new employees their self to book meetings with

the representatives from the other teams. There were no general introduction materials shared about each team.

3.2 Research strategy and data collection

To be able to start developing the onboarding processes of Lumoame Ltd, it was crucial to know the starting point and current situation of the onboarding processes from the employees' point of view and the onboarding experiences of the employees. This was done by implementing a survey to the existing employees and asking about their experiences of the onboarding they had when they joined the company. The goal of the survey was to understand how the employees had experienced the onboarding, what was the current situation on the success factors that should be covered for the employees to succeed in their job and get improvement ideas for the employee onboarding for the future. To be able to hear the voice of all employees, a survey was chosen as the research method. This was an efficient way to collect responses from all employees. To be able to both rate different factors according to the employee onboarding and have open ended feedback and ideas from the employees, a mixed research method that is a combination on both quantitative and qualitative research was implemented.

The survey form of this thesis included 11 questions (appendix 1) about the employee onboarding experience, the situation of the basic success factors of the company and improvement ideas. There was a short introduction in the beginning of the survey to explain the respondents what the survey was about and how long it should take to answer the survey. The questions moved forward in a logic way from the general onboarding experience to more specific feelings about different success factors. The questions with response options were forced questions, so each respondent had to choose one option for each question. The open-ended questions were optional for the respondents. The scaling for the general onboarding experience questions was from 1 to 5 with verbal explanations for each option. The two questions with a series of different success factors had their own scales that were suitable for the questions where

the important thing was to find out how the respondents were feeling about the things, not necessarily the absolute truth of the state of different success factors.

This survey was implemented between 29th of June and 31st of August in the year of 2022. The survey was made with the SurveyHero survey tool, and the survey link was sent to recipients by email. Every recipient received a unique survey link for the survey. The survey link was sent to 31 recipients. The survey was sent to all of the employees of the company at that moment except the two founders and the author of this thesis.

The quantitative questions were analyzed using the numeric values of the number and percentage of respondents for each score. The open-ended questions were analyzed reading through the responses and categorizing the phrases first as good feedback, improvement ideas and neutral phrases. After that the good feedback and improvement ideas were categorized under same themes. This gave an overview of which themes got the most good feedback and which themes got most improvement ideas.

3.3 Employee experience survey results

There were 24 responses for the survey, so the response rate was 77%. There was some turnover of employees during the implementation period of the survey which influenced the response rate. There was a background variable used in the survey for which department each respondent belongs to in the company. There were four departments which included Sales, Customer Success, Product and Marketing. Sales department included direct and partner sales. Customer Success included Customer Success Managers and Customer Success support functions (analytics, integrations, customer support and communication). Product department included Developers and Data Science Team. Marketing department included the marketing team members at the time of the survey. Figure 1 describes the distribution of different departments among the respondents. The organizational structure on the company has

changed since the survey was implemented, so the results are not comparable to the current organizational structure. Therefore, this background variable is not used to compare the results of the other questions in this thesis.

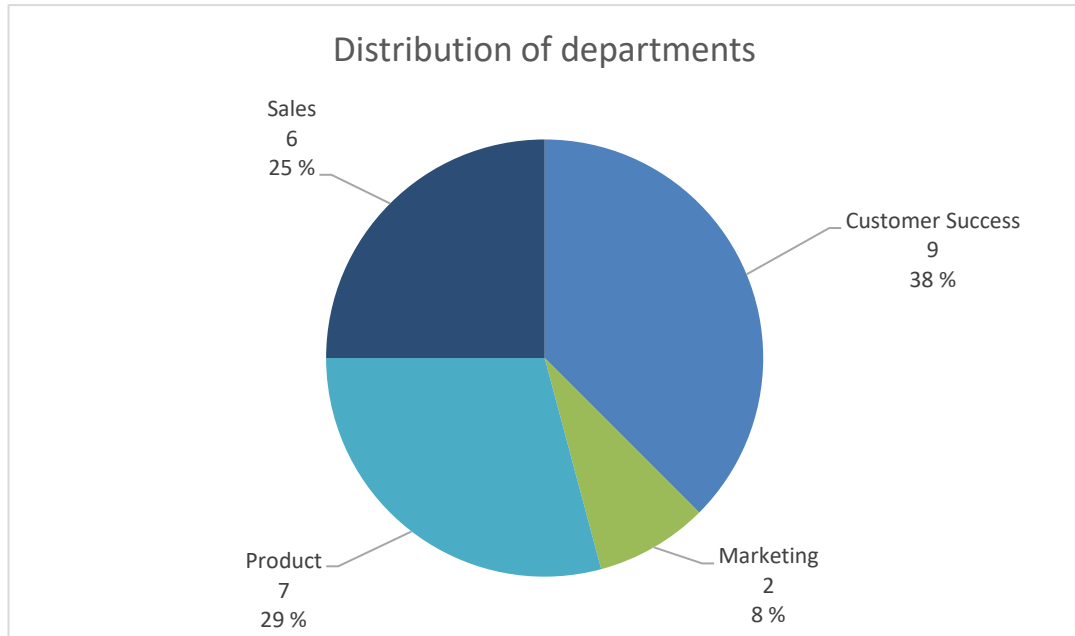


Figure 1. Distribution of departments.

The first actual question of the survey was about when the respondent had started working at Lumoame Ltd. The results of this question (figure 2) show that around 54% of the respondents had started working at the company within the previous 12 months and most of them within the last six months. On the other hand, around 46% of the respondents had started working at Lumoame Ltd more than one year ago, so it must be considered when analyzing the feedback that some of the things in the onboarding processes might have changed since the employee giving the feedback had started.

When did you start working at Lumoa?

Number of responses: 24

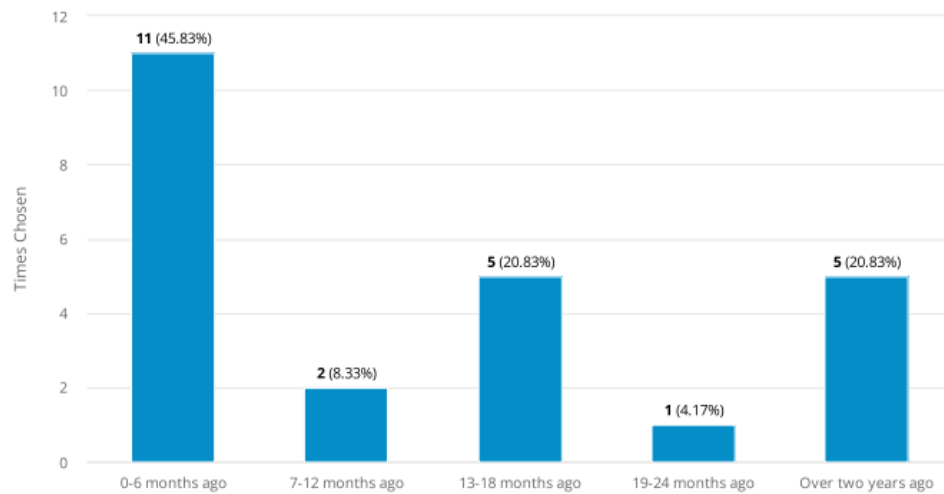


Figure 2. Beginning of employment.

3.3.1 General company onboarding

Next part of the survey was about general company onboarding. It was clarified in the beginning that general company onboarding in this case means company story, values, strategy, organization chart, common targets, market information, general introduction to product, general employee information and having the working tools set up. This part consists of two questions. In the first question the respondents rated how satisfied they were about the general company onboarding that should have taken place on the first days of the employment. The scale for the rating was from 1 to 5, 1 meaning “*very dissatisfied*” and 5 meaning “*very satisfied*”. The results of the rating can be seen on the figure 3. Biggest part of the respondents (around 54%) were very or somewhat satisfied about the general company onboarding, but only two respondents were very satisfied. Around 42% of the respondents gave a neutral score, so they weren’t satisfied but not dissatisfied either. Only one respondent had been very dissatisfied about the general company onboarding, and none had been somewhat dissatisfied.

How satisfied are you about the general company onboarding that you got on your first days at Lumoa?

Number of responses: 24

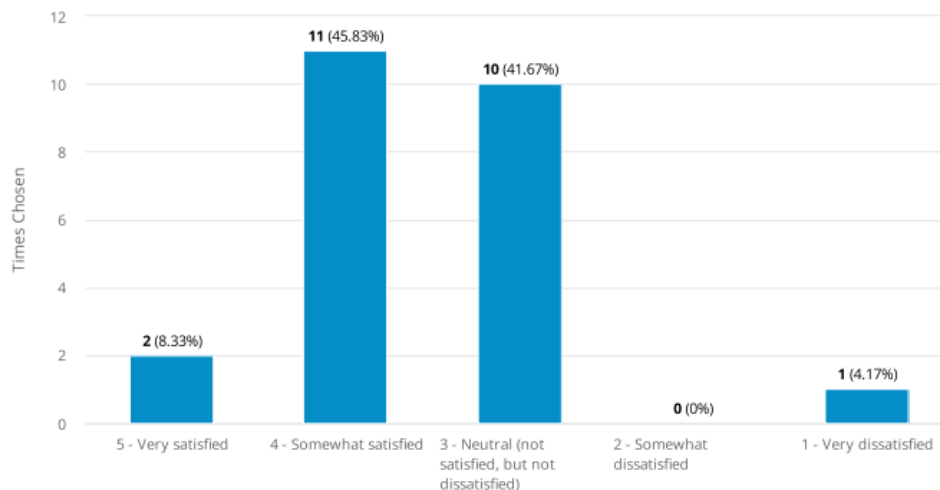


Figure 3. General company onboarding.

The other question about general company onboarding was an open-ended question for the respondent to tell more about their opinions that were behind the score they had given. There were 20 responses to this question. The themes that got the most good feedback were the good general information about the company on the first days and meeting and warm welcome of the co-workers. The biggest improvement ideas and criticism were given about the lack of structure of the onboarding. It was seen in the responses that some of the employees had not gotten a general company onboarding at all and this seemed to be correlating with the starting date of the employee. It seemed that the employees that had started longer time ago didn't have a structured general onboarding at all, so the company had already taken steps forward with that. But even the newer employees were talking about having more structure in the onboarding.

One of the outstanding things in the responses of this question was the set-up of the working devices. The problem seemed to be that the set-up of the devices seemed to take too much time from the first days of the employment

and that time could have been used to more valuable things. People were also talking about the product training in different aspects. The aspect differed a bit depending on the role of the respondent, but the overall opinion seemed to be that the product training should include more actual customer cases and the basic training could be the same for everybody but then it should continue as a role specific training because different roles have very different needs in understanding how the product works.

3.3.2 Role specific onboarding

The next part of the survey was about role specific onboarding. By role specific onboarding, this part of the questionnaire is talking about the knowledge and tools that an employee needs in their specific role to be able to succeed in their job. The first question is again about rating how satisfied the respondent was about the role specific onboarding that they got when they started at the company. The scale was again from 1 to 5, 1 meaning “*very dissatisfied*” and 5 meaning “*very satisfied*”. The results (figure 4) show that there were more dissatisfied employees in this question than in the general company onboarding question. Again, the biggest part of the respondents (around 54%) were very or somewhat satisfied with the role specific onboarding, but this time there were three very satisfied and 10 somewhat satisfied respondents. Six respondents gave a neutral score. Four respondents were somewhat dissatisfied and one respondent very dissatisfied with the role specific onboarding, which means that all together around 20% of the respondents had had a bad experience about this.

How satisfied are you about the role specific onboarding that you got to succeed in your job?

Number of responses: 24

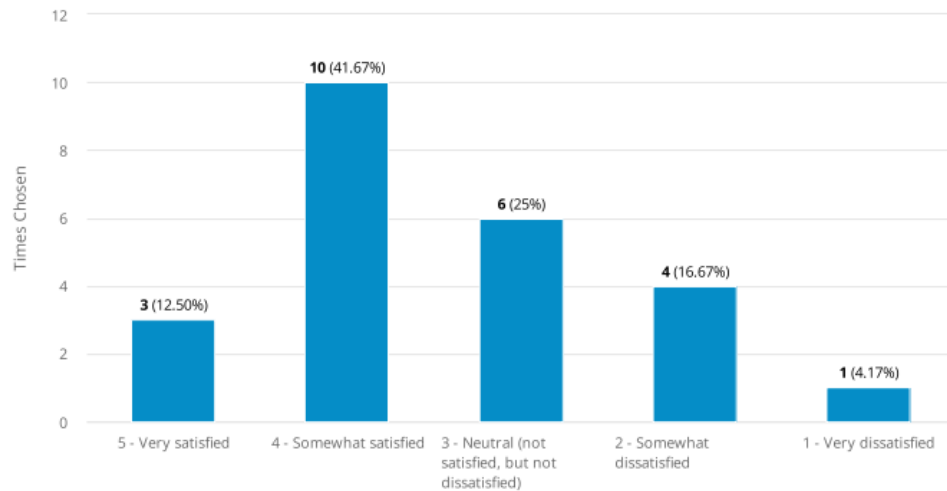


Figure 4. Role specific onboarding.

The second question in the role specific onboarding section was an open-ended question “*Tell us more. What was especially good? How could we improve the role specific onboarding?*” There were 19 responses to this question. There were two comments about good product introduction and good working tools that were introduced in the beginning. Otherwise, the positive comments were individual comments without reiteration. About the improvement areas the one theme that had most comments was a wish to have more role specific training as a hands-on working with a colleague. The other themes that were outstanding from the responses were not having a clear picture of what is included and expected in own role and not having a good structure, goals, and milestones for the onboarding process. There were also a few wishes about the product training to have more working with actual use cases depending on the role. Not having documentation and processes in general was also one thing that two people mentioned.

Role specific onboarding section of the survey had a third question “*After what time, after you started working at Lumoa did you feel like you were ready and*

able to do your job independently?”. With this question the results varied a lot between each other. Figure 5 shows that most of the respondents (6) felt ready and able to work independently after a month after they had started. Almost as many respondents (5) felt the same way after a few weeks after they had started. There were three responses in each option of “*after two months*”, “*after three months*” and “*after more than three months*” and three responses in the option “*I haven’t got to that point yet*”. Only one respondent had chosen the option “*after a week*”. This shows that there are very different experiences about this, and it varies a lot depending on the role. 62,5% of the respondents felt ready and able to work independently after a month or more. Even though it was said in the beginning of the chapter 3.2.2 that the background variable about the respondent’s team will not be used in the analyses, it is good to acknowledge that we had responses with very different options within the same team in the results.

After what time, after you started working at Lumoa, did you feel like you were ready and able to do your job independently?

Number of responses: 24

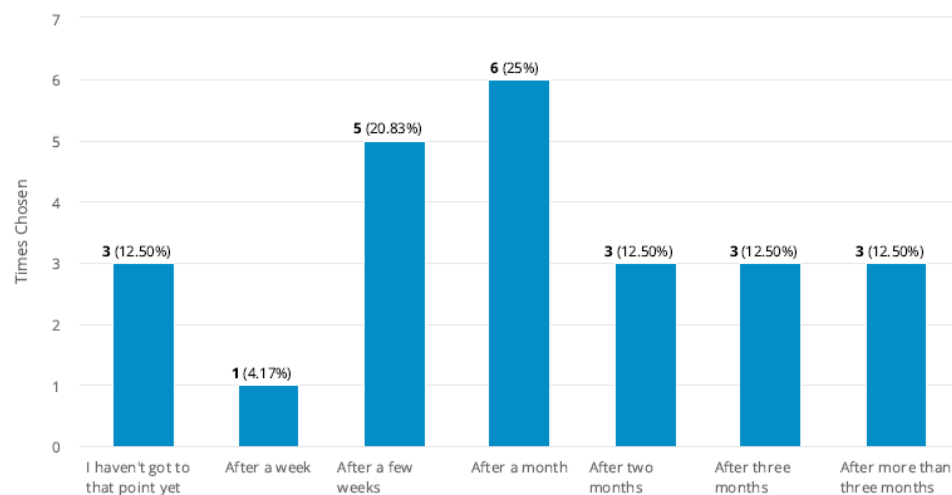


Figure 5. Time to being ready and able to work independently.

3.3.3 Success factors

The next section of the survey was about knowing the feeling of the employees about the general success factors to be able to succeed in their job. The first question in this section was to understand how clear are employee's role in the company, company values, company strategy, company goals, team goals, and personal goals for the employees. There were four options to choose with the scale from "very clear" to "very unclear". The results can be seen in the figure 6. From the overall results we can see that all the factors were somewhat or very clear to the vast majority of the respondents. At the same time, it is good to point out that there was some unclarity in all of these factors. There was one response for the option "very unclear" about company values, company strategy, and personal goal. In total there were four responses for somewhat or very unclear for each company strategy, team goals and personal goal.

How clear are the following things to you?

Number of responses: 24

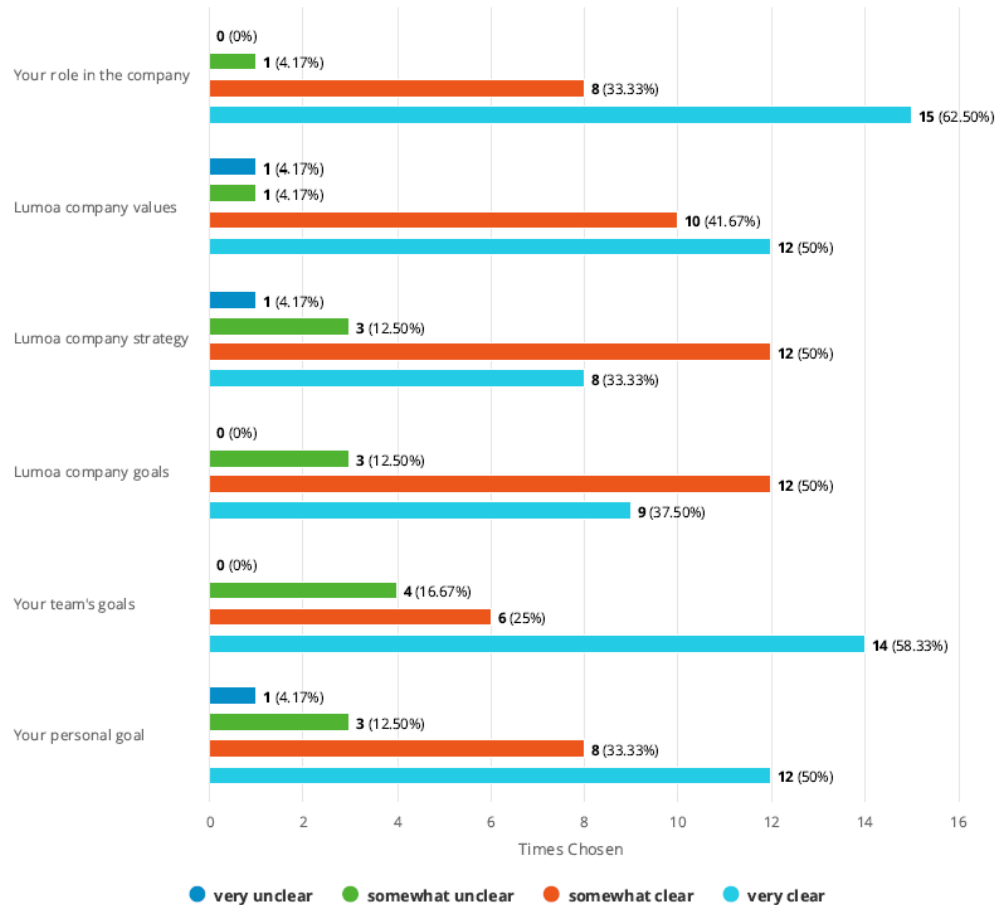


Figure 6. General success factors.

There was an open-ended question in the survey to enable the respondents to talk more about their experience about the success factors mentioned in the previous question. There were 13 responses for this open-ended question in total. Four respondents mentioned that there had been improvement in how clear these success factors are to the employees. There were two respondents who mentioned that the overall view of the success factors was clear and one respondent who mentioned that the overall view of the company was unclear. There was one respondent that hoped that the company goals, values, and strategy would be talked about more in general. One comment was about the company values not being clear in practice. There were two respondents who

mentioned that their role was clear to them and two respondents that mentioned that their roles were not clear. Two respondents mentioned that their individual goals were clearly defined, and one respondent thought that the goals were unclear. One respondent was talking about the processes in general being unclear and it wasn't clear how to work on own tasks.

The next question was about rating the employees' feelings about having the knowledge and competence, working tools and support to succeed in their job. There were four options to choose for each factor and the scale was from "Yes, *this is how I feel*" to "No, *I don't feel like this at all*". Results can be seen in the figure 7. For knowledge and competence, and working tools the variation of results was the same. 54% of the respondents felt that they mostly had the knowledge and competence, and working tools to succeed in their job, but there were few improvements needed. 42% felt that they had all the knowledge and competence, and working tools they needed. Only one respondent was feeling that more improvements around these factors were needed. With support inside the company, the variation was different. 58% of the respondents thought that they mostly had the needed support, but few improvements were needed. 29% felt that they had the support they needed. 12,5% of the respondent felt that they somewhat did not have the needed support inside the company and improvements around this was needed. None of the respondents chose the "No, *I don't feel like this at all*" option for any of the factors.

How do you feel about the following things?

Number of responses: 24

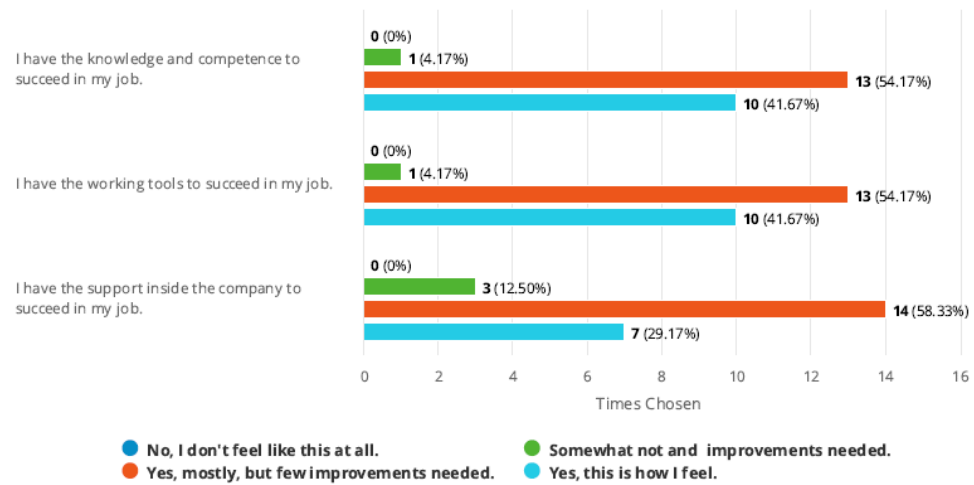


Figure 7. Knowledge, competence, working tools, and support.

There was an open-ended question related to the previous question for the employees to be able to tell more about their experience. There were 13 responses to this question in total. There were three comments where the respondents said that they had had good support in general during the onboarding. There was also good feedback about having tools and resources available for individual learning and succeeding in the job. Most of the improvement ideas in the responses were about having more support from management during onboarding. Some respondents commented that their manager had not had enough time for them during onboarding and they had to be very self-driven to find information. There seemed to be not enough support but at the same time not enough freedom to make independent decisions. One respondent said that the needed information was not documented and available easily. There was also a comment about a need to have more clarity on expectations and personal goals to be able to evaluate the factors in the previous question. Having more available product support and better communication within the company were also themes that were outstanding

from the comments. One respondent wished that there was more peer support arranged by the company for managers to bounce off ideas.

3.3.4 General feedback and ideas

The last part of the survey was an open-ended question where the respondent could give any other feedback or ideas about the new employee onboarding and describe what an ideal onboarding process would be like in their opinion. There were 13 responses to this question. The most outstanding subject in the responses was to have a well-structured and written onboarding plan with a list of things to go through and clear milestones and goals for the onboarding. This way the employees would like to be able to follow up and evaluate the progress of the onboarding. Having automated processes with different ways of learning acknowledged were something that was mentioned. Two respondents highlighted the importance of having peer support and someone to ask any questions from. There was also a comment about having all the working tools ready set up for the new employee.

Some role specific comments were about Customer Success roles to get to join customer meetings as soon and as much as possible to get a clear view of the role and to learn from the concrete customer cases. The other thing that was mentioned for the Customer Success role was to have a proper CRM system to store customer information to make the customer handovers easier. The other role specific thing was about sales roles to be able to get going with the actual work as fast as possible. There were also comments about having an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each team and having more cross functional activities. According to the responses, onboarding should be planned role specifically with clear view of the expectations and possibilities for career development included.

4 Conclusions and suggestions for improvement

The main goal of this thesis was to prepare a project plan for Lumoame Ltd to improve and develop the employee onboarding processes for the company. There were three research questions that wanted to be answered with the research. The first question was: Why is good and structured employee onboarding important for a company? This question is mainly answered in the theory chapter 2 and complemented with the survey results. Both, the theory chapter and the survey results, answer also to the second research question: What does a good and structured employee onboarding mean? These conclusions are presented in the next chapter 4.1.

The third research question was: What are the actions Lumoame Ltd should take to improve their employee onboarding processes? The onboarding development plan, tools, and materials are presented in the chapters 4.2.1 and 4.2.2. This onboarding development plan was made based on the research in this thesis and the knowledge of the author of this thesis. The onboarding development plan consists of a Microsoft O365 Planner plan, and an Excel file with project plan, onboarding checklist template and onboarding schedule template. The project plan was divided to 10 key tasks and milestones for reaching the point of a well-structured, formal, and successful employee onboarding program.

4.1 Conclusions

The results of the survey show that the onboarding experience and the level of having the needed success factors to succeed in a job differed between the employees. Although most of the respondents thought that they were somewhat of very satisfied with their onboarding experience and most of the employees had most of the needed success factors to succeed in their job, there were still a few employees that did not experience the same. This means that the onboarding experience and having the needed success factors has not been on

the same level for every employee. There are of course differences between individuals and the way they adapt information, but this should be considered in the onboarding process.

Little (2019) and Salminen (2023) emphasized the importance of a good and structured written onboarding plan with goals, responsibilities and follow-up plan. According to the survey results the most outstanding improvement area in terms of onboarding a new employee is having a well-structured written onboarding plan. This plan should include clear expectations for the role of the employee and a list of things that need to be covered during the onboarding to be able to achieve these expectations. There should be clear goals and milestones for following up the progress of the onboarding. The tasks and milestones could be scheduled in a weekly level in the beginning for the new employee to be able to feel confident that they are doing the right things from the beginning and achieving the goals. The needs for onboarding are very different for different roles, so the onboarding plan should always be done role specifically.

Having enough support for the new employee was also something that was mentioned somehow in many responses. On the other hand, it seemed to be very important to have the needed support from the supervisor to get started and have a clear view of the role and the expectations for it. In addition to this, peer support was something many respondents mentioned in their comments. The importance of having someone to ask any questions from at any point was mentioned several times. There were wishes to have this kind of support scheduled in the calendar for the new employee in the beginning, because there are a lot of questions rising at that time and there should be a plan to get all the questions answered without a feeling to be disturbing somebody else's work. Peer support in getting involved with actual work cases with a colleague from the start was also mentioned several times. The research by Sharma and Stoll (2019, 12-13) showed the same results for support during onboarding having the strongest correlation with onboarding success compared to other

factors. The importance of the support from manager and co-workers during onboarding was also raised by Little (2019).

There seemed to be also a manager's point of view in the responses. As many respondents mentioned the importance of having the support from the supervisor, there was also a point of view where it was seen that the onboarding is leaning too heavily on the supervisors' resources and there should be more automated processes and digital training materials available for the onboarding employees. In a small company the supervisors usually have many different responsibilities, and this could help them to use more time on making the expectations and goals clear, answering questions from the new employee, following-up and evaluating the progress of the onboarding and giving feedback. Both Heinonen (2018) and Salminen (2023) pointed out this problem with the limited resources of management when onboarding a new employee is only considered as a small part of the multidimensional role. Having peer support for managers was a very relevant point of view from one respondent of the survey since in a small company there is only one supervisor per team and there is no-one inside the company doing the same role as you are. Then it might be difficult to get peer support to bounce ideas regarding your own field of expertise. This applies to any role in the company where there are no colleagues doing the same job inside the company.

Cross-functional co-operation seemed to be a meaningful thing for the respondents. The results of the survey show that events like company brunch were good ways of meeting the people in the company when there are new employees. These types of events help the new employees to socialize with co-workers. Proper introduction to other teams was something that appeared in the comments of the survey results. This helps the co-operation between people from different teams when they know what are the responsibilities, goals, and ways of working of each team. Overall communication between teams was also mentioned in the responses, so activities to develop the internal communication of the company is a point to prioritize for the future. Internal cross-functional co-operation also supports the idea behind the Levers of Successful Onboarding

by Bauer (2010, 4-6) and the top tips by Little (2019) and the article from Salminen (2023) explained in the chapter 2.3.

A few respondents mentioned that too much time from the first days of the employment was spent to set up the working tools and devices. This can reduce the enthusiasm of the new employee during the first days in a new job. Setting up tools and devices before a new employee starts, is a question of having the needed resources for that inside the company. Though, the benefits of doing it can be worth using the resources as we can see that it was meaningful enough to mention about for the respondents. Little (2019) had also listed this to be one of the top tips for good onboarding experience.

4.2 Onboarding development plan

4.2.1 Project plan

The first step of the onboarding development plan is to define and document the success factors and working tools that the employees need to succeed in their jobs. First of all, the company needs to identify and document the general success factors that are relevant for all the employees in every role. This can mean for example the basic information about the company and the general internal communication tools. These success factors should also include getting familiar with the company culture and socialization with other employees in general. This part should be done by the lead team of the company as they are responsible for the company strategy and culture, and it needs to be very clear for them that what do they want every employee of the company to know and implement.

In addition to the general success factors, every team has their own success factors and working tools for each role. This means that every team should define and document the role specific success factors. To be able to do this there should be a clear definition for each role in the company. The role definitions should be in a written format, and they should include the role

description, requirements, expectations, and goals. The key success factors can also be added to the role description when they are defined. This should be managed by the team leads, but it would be good to involve the whole team to make sure that all the relevant points are covered. Supervisors in the company are responsible for the people management that also has specific success factors to cover to be able to succeed. The lead team should also identify and document the success factors and working tools that are specific to the supervisors managing the people in the company.

After identifying and documenting all the success factors and working tools mentioned previously, it is relevant to identify what are the key success factors out of all the listed things to be able to prioritize and plan the onboarding better. Different roles might have similarities in their lists of success factors, so it is also good to share the lists and find synergy to make the onboarding as efficient as possible. There needs to be a decision on who is responsible for the onboarding of each success factor to the employees. There might be several people that are for example teaching the employees something, but there should be one person responsible for each success factor. For the general success factors, it can be the same person responsible for all the employees and for the role specific success factors it might be someone inside the own team. If for example two or more teams have identified the same success factor, it can be agreed that one person from one of the teams is responsible for onboarding that success factor to the employees of each team. The best person responsible for the onboarding of a specific success factor might be the one with the best knowledge about the subject, but this person might not be the best person for teaching others, so this is a relevant thing to keep in mind when the responsibilities are defined. As employee onboarding should be seen as one of the key success factors of the whole company, it should be assured that the people that are responsible for the onboarding have the resources to do it in addition to other work.

The next phase is identifying and documenting what is needed to complete the onboarding of each success factor. This means defining what needs to happen

so that the employee and their supervisor can check the success factor as done from the onboarding checklist. This helps setting weekly goals and clearing the expectations for the onboarding employee. When it is clear what needs to be done to cover a specific success factor, there needs to be a plan for the best learning method or methods for each success factor. Creativity in planning the best learning methods is needed to make the onboarding as interesting as possible for the new employees. This way it is possible to make sure that the enthusiasm of a new employee is not lost during the onboarding process. For example, implementing gamification in the onboarding can be a fun way for the employees to learn new things. After knowing what needs to be covered and how, the next step is to plan and gather the materials and tools for onboarding for each success factor. If there are existing materials and tools that are proven to be good, they should be utilized. New materials and onboarding tools must be identified and set up for implementing the onboarding plans.

When all the success factors have been identified and documented and the onboarding methods and materials for each success factor exist, the onboarding plan for each role can be done. There needs to be a decision on the order of the success factors to be onboarded. Usually, it is good to start with the bigger picture and basic information and move to more specific things as the onboarding moves forward. The hierarchy of needs that is introduced in the chapter 2.2.2 of this thesis can also be utilized when the order of the onboarding is being planned. It is good to divide the plan for a weekly and daily plan with weekly onboarding goals and expectations. The amount of information for each day must be realistic so that the onboarding employee will not be exhausted with during the first weeks and months of the employment. Planning the onboarding with clear responsibilities also gives the people who are responsible for the onboarding a chance to plan their schedule beforehand so they will have enough time for the onboarding.

The onboarding plan should be in written format and there should be a clear checklist so that it is easy to follow the progress of the onboarding. It is essential, and also mentioned in the survey results in chapter 3.2.2, that there

are clear processes and good management for following up the onboarding, giving and getting feedback and encouraging the onboarding employee during the onboarding process. The Excel file that was produced for Lumoame Ltd with this thesis includes templates for the onboarding plan and checklist. It needs to be decided where the onboarding plans will be saved and stored, so that the onboarding employee, the supervisor, and the lead team can access the plans when they need to check and follow up the progress of the onboarding.

After the onboarding plans for each role are ready and stored as decided, they are ready for implementing. It is good to remember that the plans must be properly done but they can never be perfect, so at some point it is good to make the decision on starting the implementation and having the chance to gather feedback and develop. The next step is to define, document and implement a plan for gathering feedback from the employees about the onboarding. This feedback is valuable information for the company to develop the onboarding program. Therefore, it is not enough to just collect feedback but there should also be a continuous process for the development.

4.2.2 Tools and materials

The MS O265 Planner plan was made ready for the company to implement for this project. The tool was already accessible for the company, so it did not require any additional costs for the company. The plan includes tasks for every stage of the project: initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling, and closing. The tasks can be assigned to any employee in the company, and they can be scheduled to be done in a certain time range. An example of a task can be seen in the picture 4.

... ✕

Employee Onboarding development

○ Defining and documenting success factors
Last changed 5 days ago by you

👤 Assign

🏷️ Add label

Bucket	Progress	Priority
Executing ▾	○ Not started ▾	● Medium ▾
Start date	Due date	Repeat
Start anytime 📅	Due anytime 📅	🔄 Does not repeat ▾

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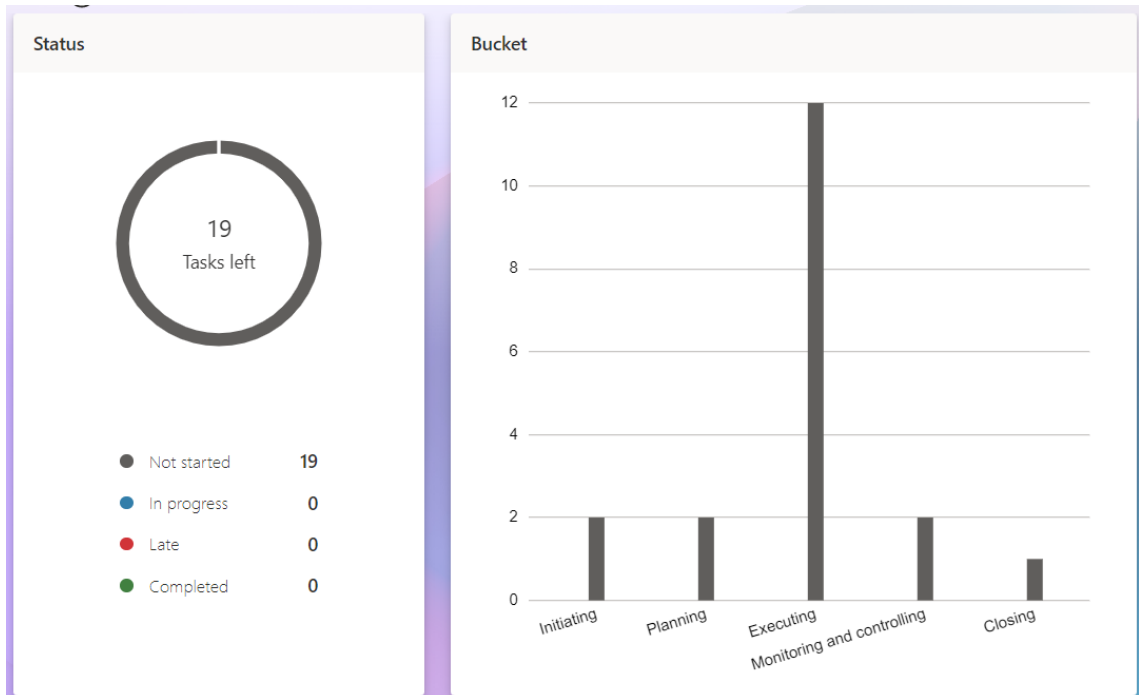
1) Lead team to define the general success factors and workin tools for all employees
 2) Every team to define the success factors and specific working tools for each role
 3) Lead team to define the success factors and specific working tools for supervisors/managers

- Also identifying the key factors out of all the success factors
- Written role descriptions for each role (description, requirements, expectations, goals, key success factors)
- Sharing the success factors with other teams and finging similarities -> synergy

Checklist 0 / 6 Show on card

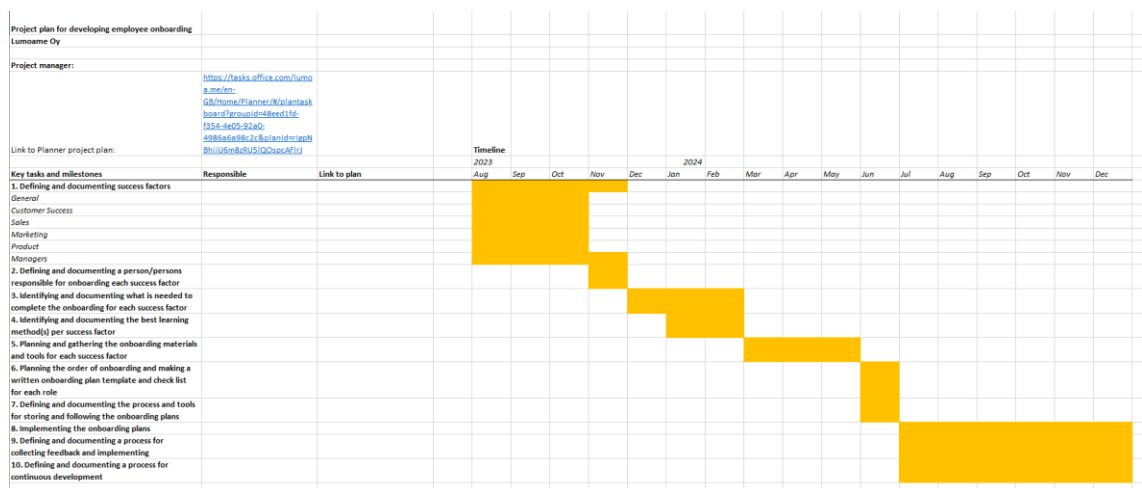
Picture 4. MS Planner plan task example.

The tasks can be prioritized, and the progress of each task can be monitored in the tool (picture 5). There is also a timeline where the overall schedule can be seen. It is also possible to store and share files and notes with the group of people that is part of the plan. The tool has all the relevant factors included for managing this type of project, so that is why it was chosen to be used in this project.



Picture 5. MS Planner plan follow-up chart example.

In addition to the Planner plan, there was an Excel file shared with the company. This Excel file included three sheets. The first sheet was an optional tool for planning and scheduling the executing phase of the project (picture 6). There was also a schedule suggestion for the company where the project would start on August 2023 and end in December 2024.



Picture 6. Excel project plan.

On the second sheet of the file was an onboarding checklist template that could be used to make the onboarding checklists for each role of the company (picture 7). There were examples of the different success factors and working tools that should be listed on the checklist. There was a possibility to define the people responsible for each success factor, add schedule, and mark each point as done. There was also a place where links to the materials could be added.

Lumoa onboarding checklist				
Role:				
Name:				
Supervisor:				
Link to role description and expectations:				
General working tools	Responsible	Schedule	Onboarded check (date)	Links to materials:
Equipment				
Phone + charger				
Computer + chargers				
Display				
Mouse				
Keyboard				
Headphones				
Keys				
Key to the office				
Systems/programs				
Slack				
Outlook				
MS 365				
Personio				
Bezala				
General success factors				
General company info				
What does Lumoa do?				
History				
Values, culture				
Mission				
Vision				
Strategy				
Market				
Customers				
Organization				
Management system / general meetings				
General product introduction				
General working policies				
Employment contract				
DPA (Data Processing Agreement)				
Working hours				
Sick leave				
Health care				
Office tour and general office policies				
Remote work				
Salary policy				
Travelling policy				
Holidays and other absence				
Employment benefits				
Company culture and socialization				
<i>Add here...</i>				
Role specific working tools				
Equipment				
<i>Add here...</i>				
Systems/programs				
<i>Add here...</i>				
Role specific success factors				
<i>Add here...</i>				

Picture 7. Excel onboarding checklist.

The third sheet had a template for the onboarding schedule (picture 8). There were places for weekly onboarding goals and daily plan for each week where the onboarding could be scheduled very specifically. There was also a

suggestion of using color codes for the different weekly goals, so it would be clearer to the onboarding employee that which onboarding activities are linked to which goal.

Lumoa onboarding schedule												
Role:												
Name:		Timetable can be used if it's seen relevant in addition to Outlook calendar. Use color codes to make this more clear and visual.										
Week 1	Week goals:	Achieved	Time	Monday	Time	Tuesday	Time	Wednesday	Time	Thursday	Time	Friday
Week 2	Week goals:	Achieved	Time	Monday	Time	Tuesday	Time	Wednesday	Time	Thursday	Time	Friday
Week 3	Week goals:	Achieved	Time	Monday	Time	Tuesday	Time	Wednesday	Time	Thursday	Time	Friday
Week 4	Week goals:	Achieved	Time	Monday	Time	Tuesday	Time	Wednesday	Time	Thursday	Time	Friday

Picture 8. Excel onboarding schedule.

It was suggested to the company to start implementing the employee onboarding development project with these tools. In addition to these materials there was a summary of the key conclusions and findings made for the company that summarizes the most relevant points of this thesis.

4.3 Validity and reliability

Validity of a questionnaire can be seen as the ability to measure what wanted to be measured. It is good to evaluate the different validity aspects of a questionnaire such as the validity of the questions, the structure, and the results. (Saunders et al. 2019, 516-517.) The goal of the survey in this thesis was to understand how the employees had experienced the onboarding, what was the current situation on the success factors that should be covered for the employees to succeed in their job and get improvement ideas for the employee onboarding for the future. All of these aspects were covered with the survey results, so the overall validity of the survey and the results was in a good level.

There were instructions on what was meant by each section of the survey. The survey was constructed in a logic way and the response options for the quantitative questions were both in numerical and verbal form, so that the respondents knew what each score meant. A mixed methods research approach was essential to get both quantitative and qualitative data, so that the results gave an understanding of the general situation of the different aspects but also pointed out the most meaningful things for the respondents about the employee onboarding process in their own words. The validity of the open-ended questions was not always correlating with the actual question, but overall, the responses gave a clear view of the expectations and wishes of the employees. The background variable that gave information on the team of the respondent was not valid by the point of analyzing the data as the organizational structure had changed.

Reliability of a research refers to the consistency in the results. In a case of a questionnaire, this means that the questions will produce consistent findings. (Saunders et al. 2019, 517-518.) There were both forced and optional questions in the survey in this thesis. The forced questions were the quantitative questions, so they produced consistent results that were reliably comparable. The open-ended questions were optional for the respondents. It can be seen in the survey results that there were more responses to the open-ended questions in the beginning of the survey than in the end of the survey. There seemed to be around 13 out of 24 respondents that were consistently responding to all of the questions. This means that the reliability of the results for the open-ended questions do not represent the opinions of all the employees, but the response rate for the open-ended questions was good enough to make assumptions and conclusions of what can be seen as the most meaningful things for the employees, and they also correlate with the findings from the literature research.

5 Closing

As seen above, employee onboarding is a multidimensional concept. It is a matter of each employee in the company since every employee goes through onboarding when they start working at the company and maybe even several times in the same company after a longer break from work or if they start a in a new role within the company. When someone is being onboarded, it is a matter of each employee to help the process to succeed. The management of the company has the main responsibility for employee onboarding. A company will not succeed without the right people working for the company. When a decision of recruiting an employee has been done it is the company's will to have a well performing, motivated, and engaged employee executing the company strategy in a long-term view. Recruitment is a great investment to a company, so it is important to make this goal succeed, and onboarding is the key element it this.

The research in this thesis shows that for the onboarding process to succeed, role clarity, and clear plan and expectations for the onboarding are important for the employee. The employee needs to know how their role is linked to the company mission, vision, and strategy, and what is the purpose of their role in the company. They need to feel connected with the company culture and have the feeling of acceptance among the co-workers. To be able to reach a successful path in their role, the employees need strong support from the managers and colleagues. This means that the whole organization should be engaged to executing the onboarding processes and there should be enough resources for them to be able to do this. A formal and systematic approach of Strategic Human Resources Management in onboarding is shown to lead to best results. Good management is the key of maintaining good employees. A well-managed and supportive onboarding gives the employee the experience of good management from the beginning of the employment.

When an employee is well onboarded, they will likely become an engaged and motivated member of the organization. This will likely lead to better performance and well-being starting from the early days of the employment that again leads

to better business results for the company. With engaged and motivated employees, it is easier for the company to make long-term business planning and ensure success for the future.

This thesis succeeded in reaching the goals that were set for it. It gives an answer to why is good and structured employee onboarding important for a company. This is introduced in the theory chapter of the thesis that is looking at employee onboarding as a strategic tool and gives examples of the benefits of good onboarding. The theory chapter and the survey results give a clear picture of what does a good and structured employee onboarding mean and what are the actions Lumoame Ltd should take to improve their employee onboarding. As an outcome of this thesis a plan and tools for an employee onboarding development project was given to the commissioner company.

As further research, it would be interesting to focus on the different learning methods that can be used in employee onboarding. Digitalization has offered and is constantly offering new ways and tools for learning and the ways of working have moved to more remote during the previous years. Investigating the different methods that are used in onboarding and having a focus on the special aspects of remote onboarding would be interesting topics for further research. Another aspect for future research could be focusing on onboarding managers with a supervisor role and looking at the special needs for onboarding when the new employee is responsible for managing people in the company and is representing the employer in their role. For the commissioner company of this thesis the next step after developing the onboarding processes could be developing a structured and systematic management plan for employee competence and professional development. This would give the company a way to make sure that the well performing and engaged employees will stay motivated and are engaged with the company strategy in a long term.

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Survey form

Onboarding experience



Welcome to the Lumoa onboarding experience survey!

In this survey we want to find out what have we done right during your onboarding process when you started at Lumoa and what should we improve.

Your feedback will be used to improve the onboarding processes for new employees in Lumoa in the future, so please be as honest and specific as possible.

Answering will take about 15-20 minutes. Thank you so much for taking the time to answer this survey.

Start the survey by hitting "next".

For starters...

When did you start working at Lumoa? *

0-6 months ago

7-12 months ago

13-18 months ago

19-24 months ago

Over two years ago

General company onboarding

In the following question, please give feedback on the general company onboarding that you got on the first days when you started at Lumoa. By the general company onboarding, we mean company story, values, strategy, organization chart, common targets, market information, general introduction to our product, general Lumoa employee information and having your working tools set up.

How satisfied are you about the general company onboarding that you got on your first days at Lumoa? *

5 - Very satisfied

4 - Somewhat satisfied

3 - Neutral (not satisfied, but not dissatisfied)

2 - Somewhat dissatisfied

1 - Very dissatisfied

Tell us more. What was especially good? How could we improve the general company onboarding?

Role specific onboarding

In the following question, please give feedback on the role specific onboarding that you got when you started at Lumoa. By the role specific onboarding, we mean all the knowledge and tools that you need in your specific role to be able to succeed in your job.

How satisfied are you about the role specific onboarding that you got to succeed in your job? *

- 5 - Very satisfied
- 4 - Somewhat satisfied
- 3 - Neutral (not satisfied, but not dissatisfied)
- 2 - Somewhat dissatisfied
- 1 - Very dissatisfied

Tell us more. What was especially good? How could we improve the role specific onboarding?

After what time, after you started working at Lumoa, did you feel like you were ready and able to do your job independently? *

Being ready and able to work independently doesn't mean that you would know everything and wouldn't need any help from others anymore, but the point when you felt like you were able to complete most of your tasks independently and start working productively.

- I haven't got to that point yet
- After a week
- After a few weeks
- After a month
- After two months
- After three months

After more than three months

Success factors

In this section, we would like to know what is the current situation on the success factors that enable you to succeed in your job.

How clear are the following things to you? *

	very unclear	somewhat unclear	somewhat clear	very clear
Your role in the company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lumoa company values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lumoa company strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lumoa company goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your team's goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your personal goal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please, tell us more about your experience.

How do you feel about the following things? *

	No, I don't feel like this at all.	Somewhat not and improvements needed.	Yes, mostly, but few improvements needed.	Yes, this is how I feel.
I have the knowledge and competence to succeed in my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the working tools to succeed in my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the support inside the company to succeed in my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please, tell us more about your experience.

Is there anything else?

Here you can write, if there is any other feedback or ideas about the new employee onboarding processes of Lumoa, that you would like to tell. You can also describe what would an ideal onboarding be like.