Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

CU I&E Submission: Onboarding Program for Office of Contracts and Grants [1]

Category

HR Management
Training/Education

Submitted By

Niki Spaeth, nicole.spaeth@colorado.edu [2], Training Manager

Project Team

Niki Spaeth, nicole.spaeth@colorado.edu [2], Training Manager
Jessica Trowbridge, jessica.trowbridge@colorado.edu [3], Senior Office Administrator

Project Description

We launched a new employee onboarding program for OCG (Office of Contracts and Grants) using Canvas as a centralized online platform. Using the design and tracking features within Canvas, I created several individual "assignments" that allow new employees to take ownership over their onboarding to-do list and ensure that both supervisors and new employees do not miss out on valuable onboarding tasks, training or information. The program includes required CU HR tasks and trainings, resources and information to ensure competence with the business and communication tools used by our department, self-paced eCourses with job-specific content, and a virtual meeting cadence to connect new hires to current employees and ensure intentional one-on-one time with their supervisors to assess their needs along the way.

Project Efficiency

This new onboarding program streamlines and standardizes the onboarding program for all OCG employees and supervisors, ensuring all of our new hires (regardless of their work location) are receiving an exceptional and thorough onboarding experience. Our former onboarding protocol required supervisors to gather information and task lists from various units and resource locations. In addition to the administrative burden on supervisors, the quality of training and onboarding materials varied from team to team and the quality of the onboarding experience for a new employee was often dependent on the supervisor's experience, workload/availability, and the team's ability to address questions. The new OCG

onboarding program frees our supervisors to be more intentional with new hires and focus on the technical skills required for the position. It also provides a centralized location for resources, progress tracking, and access to an all-encompassing onboarding task list.

Project Inspiration

Most of OCG's employees work remote or hybrid schedules. It was vital to have an onboarding program inclusive to those who cannot connect with their teams in the office. Also, our department's workload is increasing with the volume of research funding coming into CU Boulder. This means we're hiring more often, but we're also managing more awards. By creating an onboarding program that empowers new employees to work through a comprehensive curriculum without having to wait on supervisor availability, we instill trust in our new employees while freeing our current employees/supervisors to be better mentors by removing administrative barriers.

What Makes You Happiest about this Project?

This program empowers new employees to hit the ground running without having to wait for supervisor availability or instruction. From day one, they get to start working towards the familiarity and confidence that we all crave when we start a new role. By trusting our new hires with their onboarding experience, we set the stage for a culture of trust within our department.
This program serves as a model for other campus departments/institutes, including LASP and the Program Management Office within RIO. I've shared my Canvas course as a template to help these units revitalize their own onboarding programs.

Additional Information

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/past-submissions/cu-ie-submission-onboarding-program-office-contracts-and

Links
[1] https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/past-submissions/cu-ie-submission-onboarding-program-office-contracts-and [2] mailto:nicole.spaeth@colorado.edu [3] mailto:jessica.trowbridge@colorado.edu