

Development of Onboarding and Orientation Program

For Next Step Ministries

By

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Final Project

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We hereby recommend that the Final Project submitted by Paige Reid

Entitled: Development of Onboarding and Orientation Program for Next Step Ministries

Be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Leadership  
Development.

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We certify that this Final Project all research involving human subjects complies with the  
Policies and Procedures for research involving Human Subjects, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods  
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### **Abstract**

The researcher of this thesis wanted to improve employee engagement and tenure for Next Step Ministries by developing a proper onboarding program and orientation. The research found that having a proper onboarding and orientation program will improve employee satisfaction as well as tenure of the employee. The research that took place was how to form an onboarding program that is aimed to improve employee engagement and tenure. It was found that taking the needed time with a new employee and making sure they know the culture and values of the organization is truly important. After researching about other developed onboarding programs, it is clear that Next Step Ministries needs to develop a proper onboarding program and orientation. The next plan of action for Next Step Ministries is getting the Boards of Directors' approval on the onboarding program and the budget.

### **Dedication**

This thesis project is dedicated to the future employees of Next Step Ministries. As I worked through this master's course, I kept the future of Next Step Ministries in mind in hopes that it will make the organization a better place for you to work.

### **Acknowledgment**

When writing this thesis paper, I wanted to take the time to acknowledge a few individuals. First, I'd like to acknowledge my classmates. There were some long nights and many phone calls that brought us closer together. I started this program not looking to gain friends, but in the end, I could not have done it without each of you. Special thanks to Katie X., I'm thrilled our paths crossed and we became sisters even states away! When looking back at writing this thesis over the course of the Masters in Leadership Development program, each class had a hand in this research. All the classes have shaped the researcher into someone who can successfully put this program to use.

Second, I would like to thank my parents for being there when grades came in, doing happy dances when needed, and continuing to support me in my Woodsie adventures. Lastly, I would like to thank my husband Matt. You supported me through long nights, critiquing my work before turning it in, made me take out every "that" you came across because it's my overused word. I know it was not easy slowing our lives down so that I could do this the right way.

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## Introduction

Next Step Ministries, Inc. is a ministry first and a service provider second. The organization believes that each person was created perfectly for God's will in their life. "They provide safe, appropriate, and interactive day programs for individuals with unique needs in a Christian environment" (2018). Next Step Ministries improves the quality of life, not only for these individuals but for their families and others who assist in their care. "Next Step Ministries provides a day program that meets the needs of our moderately to profoundly developmentally delayed population" (2018). The organization is set apart from other programs because of some services that are provided such as tube feeding, suctioning, and toileting. They serve clients in Cherokee, Cobb, Fulton, and Forsyth counties. One reason that people come from surrounding counties is due to the lack of programs that will provide these services. Next Step Ministries, Inc. offers five programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The company currently has 19 staff members and around 35-40 clients daily. Next Step Ministries is working hard to help with employee engagement and retention.

One unique thing about Next Step Ministries is they also serve the parents and families. It is important to assist the parents and siblings in walking through the special needs' world. This may be introducing them to adult products so they do not use "baby" products to helping them with the difficult conversation of what they need to set up in case they cannot be there anymore for their child. A lot of programs do not want to have that difficult conversation when it is important in helping families know what will happen when parents pass away leaving their disabled loved one. Many of the clients at Next Step Ministries have been kicked out of other programs due to the amount of assistance each needs to successfully move throughout the day. Many of these individuals simply have a wheelchair that may require the use of a lift to use the

restroom. One unique trait about this organization is that they are a ministry, and this includes the fact that if a family comes to them with a need, Next Step Ministries finds a way to provide. This may mean ordering additional equipment or different supplies. It can also mean a discounted rate in service, which is done on a case by case basis and each case is evaluated for the need along with an action plan on when to reevaluate the need.

If someone comes in with a client that will not fit with the rest of Next Step Ministries clientele, the answer is not just a simple “no”. The staff takes pride in finding resources for those individuals that will suit their family better. This benefits the families by potentially solving the problem and benefits Next Step Ministries since this is compatible with their value statement. This program has a reputation that they care for all special needs individuals and their families not just the ones that are served at the facilities.

### **Mission Statement**

Next Step Ministries serves families in Cherokee, Cobb, and Fulton counties by providing therapeutic day programs for individuals with special needs in a Christian environment.

### **Vision Statement**

Special needs individuals will improve their quality of life by participating in safe, appropriate, and interactive programs.

### **Values Statement**

We value a Christ-based philosophy in loving, serving, and teaching others within the community, particularly those of special needs, their families and others who assist in their care.

### **History of Next Step Ministries**

While working in the local school system, Physical Therapist, Lori Baker, recognized a gap in services once students with disabilities aged out of the school system. Most programs for



the special needs population were designed to serve higher functioning clients capable of performing a job on some level. These programs had lengthy waiting lists and were very selective as a result. Those clients with more profound disabilities had fewer viable options outside the home.

Lori responded to that need by founding Next Step Ministries as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation in 2007. In April 2009, the Therapeutic Day Program was started in Woodstock, Georgia by serving four clients in small rented office space. A few months after, the Saturday Respite Program began. By 2010, the square footage was doubled to allow for additional clients, as well as the start of the Summer/School Break Camps and Drop-In Services.

The Job Skills Program was started in 2012 to serve the needs of higher functioning clients (in the moderate developmental level). Next Step Ministries outgrew the rental space and in 2014 purchased and renovated a building. Currently, Next Step Ministries is on a 2.3 acre, quiet and peaceful lot in Woodstock, Georgia with room to grow. With a staff of 19, the organization schedules about 35-40 clients daily and serves approximately 70 unique individuals yearly through the various programs.

The organization hopes to break ground on a new facility adjacent to its current location in the next year. This new building will be built with the clients in mind. This includes, more open area that can safely fit a number of wheelchairs, state of the art nurses' stations, and bathrooms that are bigger than the standard ADA bathrooms. With this facility, Next Step Ministries will be able to serve 90 clients to 120 clients. It is hoped that this building will be able to grow into the need that Cherokee County will see in the next ten years.

**Employment Needs**

Next Step Ministries has noticed significant growth in their client population in the past three years. As the client population grows, so does the need for employees. Due to the nature of what the organization does, it must be selective about who is hired to work alongside the clients. Next Step Ministries looks for employees that have a heart for the population of special needs individuals and the mind to keep them safe while challenging them to grow. This could be retired special needs teachers that have many years of experience to those that have never been around an individual with special needs. A teachable spirit and a heart to serve seems to be the perfect combination. There is also a position for a nurse that is very unique for a typical Registered Nurse. While a lot of nurses become a nurse to be in the hospital setting; some find it too fast paced, stressful, and dislike the odd hours. Next Step Ministries' nursing position allows nurses to pray over the clients, listen to Christian music while working, and have a long-lasting connection with each individual they care for on a daily basis. Next Step Ministries does not have the normal benefits that a hospital has, however, they have many benefits that hospitals could never give. These benefits include a steady schedule, day shifts, and appropriate breaks each day.

**Current Onboarding and Orientation Program**

The current onboarding and orientation program could benefit from significant upgrading. The current program has met the needs of Next Step Ministries thus far, however; now there is a need for something greater. This need is due to the growth that Next Step Ministries has seen in the past couple of years. The interview process is a generic sit-down interview that talks about strengths, weaknesses, and what they need out of a team. If the interviewer likes the candidate, then the candidate gets invited back for a second working interview. The four-hour working interview requires individuals to work on the floor alongside current staff and clients. This process

helps in two ways; one is that the employees get to meet who they may be working with and the other is that the interviewee gets to see a half-day in the life at Next Step Ministries. It is supposed to help both the interviewer and the interviewee see if this is the right fit for all parties involved. The organization can see if the candidates are comfortable around the profound individuals and maybe even a seizure or two as well as see if they take simple directions well. The one negative to the working interview is that each day looks different. Every candidate cannot be exposed to the same situation. One in four individuals are eliminated after the working interview but would have been hired based on the traditional interview. This discovery reinforces the need for a working interview as part of the hiring process. Before the interviewee is offered a position, the interviewer gets the opinion of the entire staff that worked with the interviewee that day. The decision for an addition of another employee does not just land on the leadership team but also the rest of the staff.

The next step in the process is getting the new employee the paperwork needed, the identification check, and a drug/background check. This all must be done before the first day, however; that does not always happen. The reason this may not happen is due to the process. After the working interview, Next Step Ministries may offer the job before letting the interviewee leave or they may call them to ask them to come to pick paperwork up and schedule a time to talk about the benefits and details of the job. Next Step Ministries is not the only organization with a simple onboarding process. The author of *Get Onboard with Onboarding* states that companies “either focus purely on administrative tasks while doing little to encourage new hires in the corporate culture, or they make the orientation into a celebration, complete with videos and monologues about how great the company is, but do nothing to help them become productive members of the team” (Workforce, 2013). This is exactly what the current process looks like at Next Step Ministries. Their first day on the job is filled with reviewing the Employee Handbook and

completing Relias Training. Relias Training is an online training program that introduces the new employee to a lot of the protocols that Next Step Ministries uses. Relias Training is geared for organizations who serve special needs individuals and/or seniors. Once this training is done, the new hire will join the floor with the staff and clients. After a few days of experience on the floor, the leadership team trains the individual on how to bathroom and feed the different clients. At this time there is no official process to assess how the new employees are doing. One of the biggest needs is to develop a scheduled review at 90 days as well as design a process to verify completion of post-probation activities. At 90 days, new employees should have completed their CPR certification, signed up for a simple IRA, and signed up for health insurance. Right now, the process is not formalized. It usually happens at least a month past due.

Next Step Ministries is at the point where they need to develop a proper onboarding and orientation process. It will save time and money in the long run and develop a team that knows exactly what is expected of them. Having an onboarding process would improve employee turnover. This turnover can be costly to an organization like Next Step Ministries. “The cost of replacing an employ ranges from 30% to 50% of that employee’s annual salary, while for senior-level positions and jobs requiring more extensive skill sets, turnover costs can run even higher” (Cruz, 2015).

### **Problem Statement**

To improve employee engagement and tenure, Next Step Ministries needs to develop a proper onboarding program and orientation. This program would be for new employees to better prepare them for the job.

Without an onboarding program and proper orientation, there are parts of the job that are not defined properly and can cause problems in the future. It is known that there are missing

components to onboarding and orientation programs due to the comments heard by staff and the frustration expressed by the training team. There is also no formal process for employee development or onboarding at this time. Each employee only gets the attention that the program director can give at that time. Until now, when the company has grown, onboarding and orientation truly wasn't looked at as important. It was how can we get the new employee on the floor the fastest because we need them? This is short-sighted and could impact the future growth of the organization. It is also very important that each individual that starts a position at Next Step Ministries has the same experience so that they cannot say that there was discrimination or favoritism. Amber Hyatt, director of product marketing at SilkRoad states, "a well-designed, fun and engaging onboarding process has a significantly greater effect on employee engagement and retention when compared to the old-school mentality of one-day orientation. (Maurer, 2019)" A survey was conducted by the Aberdeen Group in 2013 shows, "companies with an engaging onboarding program retained 91% of their workers through their first year" (Bortz, 2017). This is worth the attention because there are a lot of steps to the job. The better the training is the better they will be on the floor and there will be less time spent explaining the job to them after the onboarding and orientation.

**Proposition:** Proper onboarding and orientation programs improve a company's retention and employee engagement. It has been observed that having an improper onboarding and orientation program at Next Step Ministries has been part of the cause of individuals not staying on as staff for longer than they do. The average tenure at Next Step Ministries is two years for the Direct Support Professional position. In the past year this organization has lost ten individuals. These individuals left due to a multitude of reasons; situation changes, burn out, improper training and negative attitudes toward other employees.

## Research Results

### Literature Review

Onboarding at any organization starts the same way, hiring. “Hiring the wrong person can have devastating effects on your bottom line, and not just in real costs” (Carter, 2015). In the article, Hire Right the First Time, the author shares that there are three stages to finding the right fit. These stages include recruitment, selection, and onboarding. When recruiting a new employee, it is important that the interviewer knows the market and position that they are attempting to fill. “The most reliable source for recruiting new employees is referrals” (Carter, 2015). If employees enjoy their job, they will likely tell their friends and want them to work alongside them. One source that has become popular is social media. “Employers who used social media reported a 49 percent improvement over candidates sourced through traditional channels” (Carter, 2015). Stage two is selection, according to Carter. It is important to use the tools that are given you. One of these tools is the candidate's resume. One way an organization can use a resume to their advantage is to prep questions that they come from the candidate's resume. It is also important to have scripted questions that each candidate will answer. This will help keep the interview fair. Using phrases like “tell me more” can help an interviewee become more comfortable and even get a deeper answer than just surface level. Listening is more important than speaking, make sure that you give each interviewee plenty of time to answer questions. The third stage is onboarding. It is important to provide a mentor, introduce everyone in the organization and let them know job titles, communicate expectations, and schedule progress meetings. This is to help form the culture so the new employee can feel a part of the organization as well as get to know who they can go to if there are any questions or needs.

There are three groups of people that should be involved in the hiring process for organizations with 25 employees or less. These three groups are human resources (HR), supervisors, and the CEO or Founder. HR is usually the first face new employees sees and gets to know. There is also the important job of getting all the paperwork together and starting the training process. It is also important that HR representatives take the responsibility of training others that already work for the organization. Supervisors will participate in discussion of what is needed in an employee. They will establish a relationship with the new hire, give a full picture of where the team is now, and where it is going in the future. As a CEO or founder of the company, they lead from the top. This individual can say hello to the new hires and give a history of the organization and where they see the company going in the future. It shows that the culture of the organization starts from the top.

In addition to these three groups one must not forget that every single individual that is a part of the organization has a hand in the new employee's future as an employee. Company culture is very important. Along with the importance of having a positive employee culture; making sure that new hires know and understand the culture. Rockwood writes about how to make the culture clear when writing about her personal company saying, "at Fast Shop, detailing all that information to new hires starts with the agreement letter and continues during onboarding meetings devoted exclusively to culture, the company's management methodology, teamwork and communication fundamentals" (Rockwood, 2016). She also feels that open communication about the cultural values will help employees be set up for success and in turn a longer tenure.

"The Society of Human Resource Management cites statistics that most employees don't decide to fully commit to a job until they've been on staff at least six months" (2017). This is why the first few months of an employee's time at a new organization is so important. Introduce

the employee to the organizations culture and how the organization is excited for him/her to fit in. Introductions to the team is also important, this is when the mentor partnership can be formed. Establish goals and responsibilities; “when everyone on the team has clarity around what a new hires’ job will entail, existing employees are better equipped to share pertinent information” (2017). Feedback is also important even in the beginning. It will develop a strong relationship between teammates. It is also important to “make the employee’s first day a priority” (2019). Make sure that your new employee will have what they need to make day one successful. His or her desk should be ready, computer prograded, and passwords signed up. Take the time to take them to lunch and to check on them at the end of the day. “By using a variety of learning methods and technology, organizations will be well-positioned to reap positive outcomes from their onboarding efforts” (Harnett, 2016). There are ten benefits that have been found when using an effective onboarding plan.

1. Shorten the learning curve and increase productivity
2. Facilitate compliance with organizational procedures and goals
3. Promote communication up and down the corporate ladder
4. Improve job satisfaction and retention
5. Boost performance
6. Promote commitment to organizational goals
7. Reduce management and staff stress
8. Improve company bottom lines
9. Build trust
10. Attract top talent (2018, February 18)



“An effective onboarding plan isn’t something of legends. Real organizations have experienced these ten benefits and more with onboarding programs that fit their team” (2019, February 18). It is also important that “we approach our hires the way we do clients; we aim to provide a high-level, consistent experience with each one” (Crafford, 2014). The list of benefits can be seen in so many different ways. The fact that having an effective onboarding process can shorten the learning curve means less time training; while effectively training them to their best can be seen as worth it alone. Promoting communication is also something that all organization and companies need. It will also help increase communication across the entire organization. One big thing that is seen throughout this research is that effective onboarding promotes commitment to organizational goals. This in turn helps the new employee take ownership in the goals which will help him/her succeed in the future of the organization. Once the word gets out that the organization has an effective onboarding process it will help attract top talent. It is a goal of Next Step Ministries to have an organization that people are lined up at the door wanting to submit their application. The places an onboarding program can take Next Step Ministries, especially with these ten benefits; there is no telling where the organization can go.

An organization should not be afraid to make things personal for a new hire. The leadership team should meet with the new hires one-on-one and give an inside look into what they are joining. This can even be a time to let them know the challenges that the organization may be facing and how the Board of Directors and leadership team plans on overcoming them. This can include how they will fit into helping with the solution. If they give ideas to situations that you talk about make sure to take them seriously so that you can show them that you listen. “Together, define what a successful first 60 to 90 days would look like” (Missionbox, 2018). Lastly, thank them for joining your team and mean it.

Onboarding is not just a tool for new hires. Long-time employees who move into a new position need an onboarding process for the new position. The employee should not be thrown into a new position without the proper onboarding process to help them succeed. A lot of times this can be overlooked because they are moved up within the company due to the organization trusting that the veteran employee is right for the job. “Some of the biggest stumbling blocks for new positions within a company are a poor grasp of how the organization works, misfit within organizational culture, difficulty forging alliances with peers, lack of understand of business model, ineffective decision making, and lack of experience or skill” (Byford, 2017). This does not mean that they have to take part in the whole onboarding process that new hires go through. It is important to go over the protocols that they will face with the new position, go over and system of process they will now be a part of. There is nothing worse than being thrown into a new position, forgotten about, and then told they are not doing a process correctly all because they were not trained. “When asked what would reduce failure rates, they emphasized constructive feedback and help with navigating internal networks and gaining insight into organizational and team dynamics” (Byford, 2017).

Development does not stop after the onboarding is done. There are a number of benefits to having one-on-one meetings. “When implemented correctly, these brief, weekly check-ins improve employee performance and their results in measurable ways” (Workforce, 2019). Below are the 6 benefits that Workforce found:

1. They strengthen relationships between leaders and their teams
2. They improve productivity
3. They build team loyalty
4. They benefit everyone

5. They deliver meaningful, personalized feedback
6. You can check-in on goals, and clearly align on progress and next action to attain goals

This list gives an inside look at what a positive one-on-one meetings can do. One should not wait until someone has done something wrong to have a performance review to show them what is going wrong with the job that they are doing. If those conversations or discussion happen at the correct time, at the time of the issue, then performance reviews will be used for professional development that will not only benefit the staff but also the organization.

Supervisors that give one-on-ones need to give the employees experiences that include periodic recognition, a feeling of value, how they impact the company, and share how they are progressing and growing within the organization. “These meetings not only help employees to feel more engaged and reduce the likelihood that they’ll leave, but also give managers an opportunity to spot any issues that might lead to an employee’s early departure” (Ernst, 2018).

Performance reviews seem to be a dreaded meeting not only for the employee but also the supervisor at Next Step Ministries. One method would be replacing the normal annual review process with a review called the Big 5 Performance Management Review. “Big 5 asks employees and managers focus on two questions: What are your five most significant accomplishments since our last meeting? And what are your five biggest goals until next time” (Fisher, 2015)? These are simple questions to answer that help an employee have control over their professional development. One advantage is that it builds on the way people naturally approach their job. Another is that most employees enjoy taking credit for their contributions to the organization. It helps people realize what they want to do and how much they actually get done. One way to keep this progressing is to have these conversations

at least each quarter. This will ensure that the job description is being followed and that they employee is the best that he/she can be.

There is a lot of research about onboarding and how it can improve an organization. It is important that each organization plans a process that fits the culture. Each research shows that there is a natural onboarding structure that can be formed into a program that meets the organization's values. One of the biggest discoveries for the researcher was that professional development deserves just as much attention as a formal onboarding program. When individuals can be their true self, they have better success in the organization. "When new hires introduce their authentic selves to their organization, both they and their employer perform better" (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2015). Doing this helps open up a relationship that goes beyond the normal working relationships.

When one looks at passion within an organization, they seek individuals who are equipped with similar passion for what you are hiring them to do. "The importance of a good candidate experience cannot be underestimated. Research has shown that 88% of job applicants are more likely to buy from a company if they've had a positive experience when applying for work there" (Seko, 2018). Research also found that:

1. 69% of employees are more likely to stay with a company for three years if they experienced great onboarding;
2. 33% of new hires leave before their first anniversary. Companies with an engaging onboarding program retained 91% of their first-year workers; and
3. Onboarding programs can improve employee performance by 11.5% (Seko, 2018)

With these numbers it makes sense to spend time and money on effective onboarding. Especially when the organization experiences the benefit of properly onboarded employees. These numbers

show that an onboarding experience can increase tenure for an employee with a good onboarding experience and can even improve employee performance. These benefits include job satisfaction, employee engagement, and staying past the normal tenure. Being upbeat is also very important. A lot of people come in and feed off of the mood within the organization. If people are stressed within the company and new individuals can see that, then they most likely won't be back for the second interview. Making sure that individuals stay motivated and productive can be a full-time job. However, once given the tools, these new hires will be able to assist you in taking the organization to a whole new level. It may be that one shows the management team a new idea that helps the organization expand the mission. "Onboarding should be leveraged to inspire newcomers and to transform them into brand advocates and ambassadors" (Tedgui, 2017). It is important to let individuals grow and become confident because "according to Equifax, new hires are most likely to quit within the first three to six months of employment" (Sohn, 2017). This statistic shows the importance of committing to a strong onboarding effort in order to make a difference.

### **Training Process**

There are many opinions on proper training processes for organizations. One thing is across the board, and that would be that organizations need a proper onboarding program to be successful with new hires. Three areas will be discussed in the training process and that will include, the inconsistency with trainers or mentors, lack of time and resources, and the lack of policies and procedures. Gathering information from other companies and professionals in Human Resources can help discover a clear path to make an amazing onboarding program that will ensure a training process that will help Next Step Ministries grow. It is important that Next Step Ministries continues to grow while empowering and engaging the employees. One piece of

advice that most individuals agree on is to make sure to hire and train properly because it costs more to fire than to hire someone. Ensuring a good fit in the organization is key to starting any training process. "To find the best match, create a disciplined interview process. Create questions that compare an applicant's knowledge and abilities with the role as you've defined it" (Cruz, 2015). The onboarding process will also be evaluated after each training to see if each individual assisting with the onboarding process to be sure that they are pulling their weight when it comes to training other individuals. Each individual training "should offer feedback on their role in the onboarding process and set specific goals for them" (Workforce, 2017).

### **Inconsistency with Trainers or Mentors**

One issue that is seen at a lot of organizations is inconsistency in those in charge of training and lack of mentor programs. If an organization does not have a lead trainer and has multiple people doing the training, there could be items left out or not done at a consistent level. Dipankar Das is Head, Learning, and Development at Tata Projects Limited and he specializes in managerial and leadership development. He wrote an article that includes onboarding as a strategy that companies should use. He believes that new employees should have a buddy plan or a quarter-long support plan for new hires that will make joining a new company easy. He stresses that new hires are very costly to companies and that companies should invest in the new hire so that they will stay for a while. He states, "Millennials and the Gen Y are in particular less tolerant of unpleasant experiences." (Das D., 2018) He also went into detail about a company that was having a problem in early attrition. However, with an improved onboarding process, it dramatically got better.

Tony Bellitto is Firstronic's director of quality and wrote an article, "An Onboarding Process Can Build a Strong Organizational Culture." This article talks about how difficult it is to

engage and retain workers. This is an article that has factual numbers on how an improved onboarding system helped them improve numbers including on-time delivery, inventory turns, gross margin, and compound annual revenue growth rate. The onboarding plan includes relationship-building activities and training activities that happen in the first couple of days. It is important for the new employee to feel like they can do the job but also that they fit in the company culture and that they belong on a team. This company includes a mentor program, a training plan that looks like a map of what will be done and when. Mr. Bellitto feels that one way that his company improved was through their new employees' graduation or recognition program. His employees feel empowered when they move up in the company and sees that that has made a significant difference in company culture. One quote that stuck out was "Design the onboarding process to make employees feel valued by the company." (Bellitto T., 2016) One example that Bellitto gave was each person in his organization would be given a different colored smock when they hit different achievements. This smock system is specific toward that organization it can still be morphed into something that organization; however, it can still be a different way to honor accomplishments. What is important is having something that employees have to work toward and be recognized for their success. When incorporating a mentor program into an organization one has to find mentors that will put the company's best foot forward and make sure they lead new employees to their full potential. When looking at cooperative versus competitive leadership, one would need to make sure that mentors are cooperative leaders. Cooperative leaders are teammates that help each other rise to the top and know that an organization's success relies on everyone's success.

Ted Bauer has worked for several Fortune 500 companies and has a lot of experience in the process of onboarding for such companies. The article Manager: Take Accountability for

Onboarding (2016), goes into detail on how new hires feel and how they want to be treated when coming onto a new company. Mr. Bauer puts a lot of emphasis on company culture and what a good company culture can do for a business in the hiring process. If a company has a good onboarding system, it will help retain employees which will save the company money over time. He puts into perspective what kind of conversations you should have with a new hire from the beginning. This is so that both parties are on the same page from the very beginning. Ted Bauer makes great points on different ways of thinking and includes company culture in the process. Especially with the new generations working company culture is something that companies are starting to pay attention to and if they aren't, it is apparent very quickly. From Fortune 500 companies to small nonprofit organizations having a detailed onboarding process in place will save time and money in the long run. This kind of training process will also prepare new hires for the job ahead. There won't be any question on what the job will entail as well as what is expected from the beginning of the relationship between employer and employee.

Roy Maurer cast a survey where executives were polled by Futurestep division of human resources consulting, looking at how new hire retention is an issue for their organization. This was a great survey that gave insight into why new hires look for other jobs when the role they currently have doesn't meet expectations of what the hire initially believed. The survey outlines how new hires feel when they first come into a new job. It talks about how if companies do not onboard properly then the organization can have setbacks with the new hire. One thing Maurer stressed was to make sure to give honest job previews so that the potential employee know what they are getting into. Being upfront with a new employee will earn trust from the very beginning. Maurer also includes that onboarding is more than just the basic administrative processes that people usually think of. The survey put a lot of emphasis on mentorship programs so that new



hires can learn about the organization and that they also help with the retention rates. One thing that this company and survey found was that checking on the new hires to see how the onboarding process made them feel welcomed coming into the company.

When an organization has consistency in training, everything can be clear and ensure that each employee gets the same amount of information. It will help with the who, what, when, where, and why of what happens within an organization. Some also believe that it will help with employee engagement due to the information that will help the new hires be more aware of how and why the organization does what it does and how.

### **Lack of Time and Resources**

Everyone knows that time, money and resources are precious, especially to smaller nonprofits or startup businesses. This is why some of the small businesses and nonprofits have a lack of training and onboarding process. Most people think that designing an onboarding process can be expensive but there are ways to do it more efficiently. If organizations find the time and resources to start a training program, then it can set them apart from other organizations when it comes to potential hires picking one organization over another. It may take a lot of time in the beginning but in the long run, time will be saved.

Matt Pierce wrote an article about how videos and visual content can optimize onboarding for companies that are hiring. He gave ten reasons that he believes it will optimize it. He believes that many companies treat onboarding as an afterthought and that it shows with employee morale. But if a company was to use a visual aid it would help with many factors of a new employee. Mr. Pierce stated, "Visual content addresses several challenging parts of the onboarding experience, making, the process more fruitful and less stressful for everyone involved. Instructional videos, charts, and graphics improve memory retention, help foster

creativity, eliminate the recurring question, and save time. (Pierce, 2018) Visual content has the ability to help employees learn and review on their own time, address common questions, give a creative outlet, give more than just information, show off the organization in a natural way, and is cost-effective. Video is just one way that organizations can differentiate their organization.

When looking at the millennial generation coming to the workforce; one needs to see how they respond to management, what they expect, and what kind of training techniques can be used to retain millennials. Millennials are used to rapid change due to computer access and all the forms of technologies that they grew up with. Millennials like a challenge to engage them with a specific goal or task. Training them in a leadership or ownership process will keep their attention more than most positions. Hands-on-training seems to work best. Ms. McDonnell, of Saline Electronics, feels that to train millennials in a written training system seems to not work very well. Reading multiple documents does not hold their attention and they do not retain them as well as one would think. Working meetings, interviews, and pieces of training are received best. Working in a team setting and hands-on is what drives these employees most. The interviewee wants to make sure new hires are encouraged to present their ideas to their leads or management and to be heard by upper management. McDonnell also noted that millennials prefer less aggressive leadership and more of the coaching leadership types. This is very important to note because this is the future of hiring and the future in leadership. As organizations come up with a new onboarding program, they will have to think about the individuals they are developing this program for.

Another option to look into is human resource portals. The portal would include a note from the manager, first-day information, employee handbook, and any other important details

that they may need to start. This could be a program that is a catch-all when starting the onboarding process. It could be used before the new hire comes in for their first day. When hired the new hire can receive a welcome email that has his or her human resource portal where they can find all the paperwork that needs to be filled out before starting on day one. It can be where they unlock videos, protocols, the employee handbook, and sign when they read such information with an electronic signature. Depending on what the organization desires, this could even be done before coming into work. This would allow some flexibility if the new hire is needed on the floor. The other benefit is that if the portal holds training videos then it is a tool that can be looked back on when needed later in the new hire's career. The first day at a new job can be daunting and an overstimulating process. So being able to go back and re-reading or watch depending on the resource is very beneficial.

A study by J. Nelissen, A. Forrier, and M. Verbruggen uses two-part longitudinal data from 588 employees. The study looked at employee development as an impact on turnover. Employers are fearful that professional development could stimulate turnover. The results put employee turnover into perspective. This would result in higher replacement costs. One thing that makes employers fearful is that there may be more employment opportunities in the labor market. It is easy to pick up from one job and bring our skills to a new employer before a return on investment is achieved. This talks about the employability paradox, it states that "the idea of the employability paradox is that employee development increases employees' perceptions of opportunities in the labor market." (Nelissen, J., Forrier, A., & Verbruggen, M., 2017)

Employers are trying to keep this from happening is to require new hires to stay on for a length of time or to repay training costs before leaving. The point of this study is to see if that is true in which it is. They feel that employee development will also induce a retention path that is

favorable to the employer. The more you develop someone into the company the more they will feel invested.

Most employers are eager for their new hires to get on the floor and start working as soon as possible. However, studies show that proper training and onboarding processes could take up to a year to finish. That time is very valuable and if done right is worth all the time that employers put into it.

### **Lack of Policies and Procedures**

A lot of companies do not know where to start when writing policies and making procedures for employees to follow. One way for employers to start is by finding resources to help them get started. Society for Human Resource Management has great tools for ideas on an effective onboarding process. It looks at what to do before they walk in the door day one to the one-year mark. It gives great questions to ask executive staff before implementing a formal process. This helps executive staff stay on the same page with expectations on the company's new onboarding process. The Society for Human Resources Management stresses to get the paperwork done before they come on day one so that this is not something to worry about day one. Another item to set up before they walk through your door is to set up the desk, phone, computer, and logins. First day expectations are critical along with roles and responsibilities are outlined clearly. During the one-month anniversary, a one-on-one is necessary to make sure they feel comfortable and know the exceptions after being in the role for thirty days. This will show that you and the company sincerely care about the employee. After the first year, an employer should know if the employee is a good fit and will know if they are fully productive. This is also when it is appropriate to talk about compensation. This article has very well written ideas for the

onboarding process that can be implemented in any size company. This is a process that would be easy to implement in any organization.

M. Hertling and R. Bartlett believe that knowing what kind of leadership development a company already has in place is important in determining what can be improved in the process. With big companies, it is important to have smaller teams to make sure that employees don't feel lost in the shuffle. "It is believed that there are three areas of importance: building a strong organization, building a strong team, and building a strong future" (Hertling & Bartlett, 2018). After doing this study, both authors have some recommendations for building good leadership and in turn having a great training program in place. Those would include connectivity in objectives and design, the inclusion of employees, cost of programs, and development of metrics.

N. Dávila and W. Piña-Ramírez state the importance of measuring outcomes of great onboarding and the process put in place. It can either be a new hire's sources of pride or the source of criticism when onboarding goes wrong. It goes into detail on what measuring and tracking can do for a company and how important a good process is. "When measuring companies need to start with a baseline that includes having checkpoints that can be milestones of an onboarding process. There are also short-term and long-term metrics that can be used" (Dávila & Ramírez, 2018). Metrics will help measure the value of having an onboarding process at one's company. This process should be looked at as a live process that should evolve as time goes on.

It is stressed that people won't remember what you did or say but how you made them feel. So, it is important to make new hires feel important and that they are part of the team as their first day. So, when trying to find a process and procedures that fit in an organization it is important to look at the organization as a whole.

When looking at an organizations' training process it is important to know that one will need to spend time and resources making the best onboarding process that is attainable to the organization. What policies and procedures in place and are used by current employees? And lastly, that there is a training program set up for each employee so that it is a consistent program and that everyone will get the same information. If able, a mentorship program could help with a lot of things but one of the most important is employee engagement as well as the company culture. It could also bond the organizations employees to where they build trust and an understanding of one another. This will help build a culture that can work together and count on one another. An effective onboarding process is important regardless of the size of the organization.

### **Upgrading the Process for Next Step Ministries**

To help the new employee start off strong, the paperwork needed will be online and easily accessed via email at the time the offer is made. The online system will notify the Office Manager to request two items of identification. One item that will be developed is a training manual that lays out exactly what to train new individuals on as well as how Next Step Ministries wants it taught. This manual would consist of documents needed to go over with the new employee:

1. online modules
2. online training
3. the Employee Handbook
4. small quizzes that show comprehension
5. drawn-out timeline of what is expected.

There will be a welcome packet to help make the individuals feel welcomed and the knowledge to start strong. The online modules would go over the key points in the employee handbook, this

history of the organization, and employee/client rights. Online training is done through Relias, the online portal that trains professionals that work with special needs and seniors. It goes over information on transfers, infection control, working with intellectual disabilities, and more. This is a great tool to start the conversations before training on the floor. The small quizzes would come after watching the online modules and reading the handbook. This is to help with the comprehension of key points that the organization wants all the employees to understand. The timeline will help keep the employer honest. It will show exactly what the new employee can expect from the employer. It will assist with making sure that the new employee is signed up for benefits on time, what the employee can expect, and that a review will come. This will help the goal setting review to not be feared but embraced as growth within the organization.

One area that Next Step Ministries prides themselves in is their internship programs. A number of colleges work with Next Step Ministries to give their students an experience like no other. A few times this has resulted in an individual being hired on as a staff member. In the past that means that the intern transitions from being a student to a staff member with nothing more changing than a few needed documents. Chris Chesney discusses how important it is that organizations do not leave interns in the dark when it comes to onboarding. A lot of times it is assumed that the past student can jump into the role as employee without much training or orientation. “If you hire a newly graduated vocational student, whether it is a student you helped sponsor through school or someone recommended to you, you need to have an equally organized onboarding process for them too” Chesney, 2017). Do not assume they are ready to be put into the day-to-day. They need to go through the same training as every other new employee. At this time that is not happening at Next Step Ministries.

Next Step Ministries is ready for the next step in their growth. The growth is not just in the way of employees but also in the way of growth of the organization as a whole. It is important to give new employees a sense that they will be a part of the change and give them a visual representation on how. “The organization must paint a picture of where it’s been, where it is now, and where it is going in order to make an impact” (Stephenson, 2015). This will give the new employee a story of what their presence in the organization is and how it will be a part of Next Step Ministries’ future. When someone makes a vivid representation, it should leave some information up to the imagination of the new employee. Having a piece of the story that they can make their own is very important in the success and longevity of their tenure. Stephenson also believes that it is important to give individuals starring roles within the organization. If someone comes with an idea, do not take it on as another project. If acceptable, give that employee a chance to shine and bring his or her idea to fruition. This process will help the organization grow appropriately and save them time and money in the long run. An example of this would be, if the employee has an idea on a program that you believe will fit with the mission and vision. Invite that employee to sit on a committee to make it a reality. It is so important that the employees will be ready to serve the clients and families that walk through the doors each day. Building a new onboarding and orientation process that will teach them how to do just that.

### **Project Description: Next Step Ministries New Training Plan**

#### **Before Start and Orientation**

The first item needed is to get organized with the paperwork needed. Next is the information that each new employee will need to be successful in the job. Next Step Ministries uses Google Drive to share files between employees. An easy solution would be to develop a file within Google Drive where all paperwork needed could be found easily and given to the new



employee when appropriate. This would include the application for employment, employment paperwork, after acceptance paperwork, etcetera. There would also be a file for employees after they are finished with the initial orientation where they can look up any protocols, online modules, handbooks, and any other useful information that would help employees succeed at what they do. During the orientation process, each employee will be given access and taught how to use the file system.

The office staff will set the new employee up with a folder and checklist of what is needed. This file is kept in the executive director's office and is where all important documents are kept. The office staff will also be responsible for adding the employee to the schedule, the employee portal (Sandbox) where he/she is to sign in and out each day and have the welcome packet prepared to give him/her. Lastly, before day one the employee will be signed up for a drug test and sent the information. When the information is sent there will need to be a receipt that they received the information for the drug test. The position is contingent on a passed drug test and that precedent is set in the conversation after the working interview.

### **Day One**

On day one each employee will be given a folder with a welcome letter, schedule for the first two days (See Appendix A), important protocols, organizational chart, and their program's schedule. The employee's work mentor will also be predetermined before the start. This person will be someone that can help show the employee around, be support while learning new things, and be a companion that can help through the transition of a new job. Being a mentor will also help with the engagement of veteran staff members. This can be a status that they are trusted, knowledgeable, and an important part of the success of new employees. The organizational structure will be introduced by the trainer (See Appendix B). This is so the employee knows

exactly where each position fits within the organization; which in turn gives a breakdown of supervisors and what he/she can go to with any questions or concerns. It also helps to give a list of names and positions to the new employee so they can put a face to the names they are learning. This small trick can help someone feel connected to a team quickly.

Next will be a tour of the facility and an introduction to the teammates. The reason this comes after going over the organizational chart is so that when meeting the other staff members, they can know what everyone does for the organization. It is important that new employee's see how the team works. One trait that is looked for when joining a team is that the team gets along and that everyone has a job to do. It is said that "engagement should be central to the employee lifecycle from the moment they join the company" (People Management, 2018). Once everyone has made their introductions there will be a review of job expectations and complete any paperwork that still needs to be done. There will also be a discussion regarding the training structure and future development of the employee. This is where discussion of what the new employee shares where they see themselves going both personally and professionally. This is how Next Step Ministries can connect with the new employee and help develop them for the future. The performance program that will be used is in the Big 5 Performance Review (See Appendix C). This will be introduced at this time but will be implemented during their six-month review.

Once all of this is done the true training can begin. The next item on the agenda is the employee handbook. Next Step Ministries has prepared online modules that discuss the handbook in three different sections. The point of the modules is so that the handbook is not only read but highlights are videoed as well. The modules can also be stored in the Google Drive described earlier; this is so the employees can look back at them when needed. These modules

are short and simple but effective in the way of individuals remembering what is in the handbook. There is a document that is signed by each of the employees stating that they read the handbook and that all questions were answered appropriately (See Appendix D). That document is kept in the employee's file. Once this is done on the first day the new employee may go to the program that the employee has been hired for and start getting to know the clients and staff that they are going to be working with.

### **Week One**

Once all of the paperwork and day one tasks are finished, day two and three will be spent on Relias. Relias is an online education tool that teaches ten and a half hours of lessons on items like transferring clients, autism, behaviors of individuals with developmental disabilities, along with others. This is a tremendous benefit to employees. Once done with the initial ten and a half hours they are to do a total of fifteen hours a year. The benefit is that the employees can choose the classes they take so they can grow and educate themselves on matters that are important to them. The online training, Relias, is a ten-and-a-half-hour course that is broken up into different lessons. This is to be done on days two and three before training is to begin on the floor. The courses that they get to choose from will help them grow in whatever ways they choose to. There are classes about leadership, health needs, and administrative classes. These are all very diverse but needed within an organization and can help individuals take control of their professional development.

The rest of the first week has been predetermined for the new employee. Depending on the computer skills that the employee exhibits while finishing their Relias course, this may take less time, or this may take more. This must be completed no later than the fourth day. The employee will be issued a training laptop to use for these courses. By the fifth day, there will be

a check-in with the program director and training staff to assess the transition as well as talk with the new employee about assisting clients in the restroom and transferring clients. There are certain clients Next Step Ministries trains on first due to their size or the level of assistance the client needs. The organization starts with easier individuals so that the skill can be built upon. There is also training on lift use. Lifts are used to transport clients to and from their wheelchair when going to the bathroom or getting on the changing table in the nurse's station. Not everyone is a candidate to use the lift right away. This will be chosen by the training staff. The safety of our clients and staff members is of the highest priority. They will also start the process of learning how to feed each individual that needs that assistance. Depending on the program they may have more individuals that need assistance than other individuals. Due to the sensitivity and safety concern of these pieces of training, this may take longer with some individuals that have no experience than others that come with some. The pace that the individual learns new client's bathroom and feeding habits will be based on the skill that they show. Not every individual will be a correct fit physically lifting clients or using lifts. Due to employment law there are a lot of questions that could be asked but are not allowed. During the working interview we can not ask them to bathroom a client, lift a client, or use a lift.

## **Week Two**

In the second week employees continue to learn how to bathroom and feed different individuals. This also includes getting to know each client as an individual and not just a number. Next Step Ministries prides themselves on keeping client's individuality and helping them grow into the best person they can be. Next Step Ministries cannot plan around the client's seizures so that protocol will also be training upon when those situations arise. It is talked about in protocol on the first day of hire but seeing a seizure is different than reading about one. Week two is when

the new employee will be introduced to the activities that Next Step Ministries participates in. This will include tying down wheelchairs in the vehicles, using the lift on the bus and van safely, as well as rules that the Activities Director has put into place. While some of the rules seem outrageous, for an example Next Step Ministries has a no glitter rule. The idea is to keep Next Step Clients safe while having fun. Until now these rules have not been written down. The Activities Director has been appointed to be a part of the training team so that these rules can be better taught and set the new employees up for success. The week will end with another discussion with the Program Director to answer any questions that may have come up during the first full week on the floor. It is also a good time to go over any protocols that may need refreshed or explained more.

### **Month Three**

By month three, the employee can expect to see team building activities in the monthly staff meetings. There will also be an opportunity for the Program Director to assess progress and coach and provide feedback. Next Step Ministries wants to be known for helping their team grow professionally and personally. During this time training will be assessed and if there are any gaps in training, they will be addressed. The new employee and Program Director will discuss job engagement. One of Next Step Ministries' goal for this new onboarding program is to help with employee engagement. What can Next Step Ministries do to help them succeed in their position? If that individual talks about wanting to move up within the company, then it can be discussed and if the position is open the individual can apply and talk about what the employer needs to see to make that a reality. If the employee is wanting to change something about the program, they are a part of then they can bring it up to the leadership team. It is seen that when employees can

give their opinion or ideas, they will excel in what they do. This helps keep them engaged and interested in what they are doing.

Employee benefits also start at the three-month window. This is when the benefits packet can be discussed and the Executive Director signs them up to receive these benefits. These benefits include a Simple IRA plan, health insurance, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification, and paid time off (PTO). During the time of being signed up for organization benefits, there will also be a review of job expectations.

### **Month 6**

During month six there will be a performance review to assess progress and give feedback to the employee; this will be done by the Program Director. There will also be a discussion and review on short- and long-term goals that the employee put into place for themselves. If the employee has any questions about the organization, the training process, or protocols will also be talked about at this time. This will be done through a survey that they will take about their onboarding experience.

Lastly, the supervisor of this employee will start implementing the Big 5 with the employee. This is to be done every six months. This is a process where the supervisor and the employee are asked, what are your five most significant accomplishments since our last meeting? The next questions are, what are your five biggest goals until next time? For an effective meeting, the individuals need to make sure and communicate priorities and key initiatives, schedule reoccurring one-on-one meetings and come prepared to the discussion. The supervisor is trained in recognizing a job well done on goals that were achieved. They need to value the insight that the employee is giving, know that everyone in the organization makes an impact and has a hand in the growth.

Table 1: Onboarding Schedule

Prior to Start –	Day One –	Week One –	Month Three-	Month Six –
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate peer mentor/buddy</li> <li>• Create personnel file</li> <li>• Create welcome packet</li> <li>• Confirm receipt of necessary paperwork</li> <li>• Enter new staff into sandbox, personnel spreadsheet, and ADP System</li> <li>• Mandatory Drug Testing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome upon arrival – welcome packet</li> <li>• Review employee handbook</li> <li>• Overview of organization and structure</li> <li>• Discuss training and development</li> <li>• Tour and introduction to team</li> <li>• Complete necessary paperwork</li> <li>• Review Job Expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relias training</li> <li>• Daily check-ins to assist with questions or support</li> <li>• Touch base with designated mentor/buddy</li> <li>• Review organization mission and employee handbook follow-up</li> <li>• Address learning needs</li> <li>• Review Job Expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team building in staff meetings</li> <li>• Assess progress and coach for feedback</li> <li>• Identify and address learning and training needs</li> <li>• Discuss bandwidth and job engagement</li> <li>• Review organization benefits</li> <li>• Schedule CPR Training</li> <li>• Review Job Expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Review, assess progress and coach for feedback</li> <li>• Discuss and Review short and long-term goals</li> <li>• Address any questions</li> <li>• Start BIG - 5</li> </ul>

Table 2: Individuals Responsible for Orientation and Onboarding

Task	Responsible for Task	Accountable to be Informed
Ensure all necessary paperwork has been completed accurately and is in the appropriate hands for processing	Administrative Team	Program Director
Designate a mentor or work buddy who can be their peer support and introduce them to new hire	Program Director	
Introduce the New Hire to the Team and give them a Tour of the environment they will be working in, to familiarize themselves with their future surroundings	Designated Mentor/Work Buddy	Program Director
Create a great impression of the organization by providing an organizational overview of mission, vision, values and organizational structure	Program Director	
Discuss and Review company policies and procedures, this will create a clearly defined picture of expected vs unwanted behaviors	modules	Program Director
Review Job roles list of duties and responsibilities- ensure complete comprehension	Program Director	
Discuss training schedule and resources	Administrative Team	Program Director

## **Project Feasibility**

### **Evaluation of Economic Standings**

Next Step Ministries had their best year in 2019 to date as far as their economic standing within the community. At the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, Next Step Ministries restructured their pricing tiers so that money was not being left unused by the client and essentially taken away at the end of each budgeted Medicaid waiver year. Doing this helped Next Step Ministries stay within their budget for the year and achieve financial growth. This onboarding and orientation program will help financial stability of the organization because it should reduce turnover. This doesn't only affect the dollar amount but also the time it takes the team at Next Step Ministries to train individuals. This can be seen in the budget section and will be approved at the Board of Directors meeting. As always there is more than just economic need in keeping an employee satisfied when starting. It is also believed that "a misfit employee will be time consuming to manage, impact team morale and harm customer relations" (Carter, 2015). As stated earlier in the past year Next Step Ministries has lost ten employees. One way the researcher can measure success is to reduce that number to only five employees leaving. There will be an exit interview developed so that it can be determined why the employee left. If the reason they are leaving is due to a location change then those individuals will not be counted in the numbers.

### **Organizational Standing**

Next Step Ministries has a positive standing within the community. Hard work and dedication by the Executive Director and founder have provided a great path in the Cherokee County community. The Executive Director and other members of the leadership team are in



many networking and community enrichment meetings. These groups include but are not limited to the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce, Woodstock Christian Business Network, FOCUS, Young Professionals of Woodstock, INWDSK, and many others. In 2018 and 2019 an emphasis on marketing helped increase the brand and awareness of Next Step Ministries and what the organization values are as well as what they do best. This has been seen in multiple magazines, promotional videos, and even the first Gala that was hosted for Next Step Ministries. In the special needs community, word of mouth spreads. Marketing for clients has not been an issue since the first few years of existence. Once that specific community knew about the hard work and dedication that Next Step Ministries provided; a waitlist had to be established and the organization is constantly trying to find ways to grow to keep from having to turn people away. Recently, there has been an uptick in clients wanting the organizations assistance. This is partly credited to support coordinators that come into the facility on a monthly basis to check on clients on their workload. Support coordinators are government officials that check on individuals that are a part of the Medicaid waiver. They come and see if the organization is doing what they are supposed to do and that the care and attention is given to each individual. When they come in and see Next Step Ministries staff loving the clients while keeping the happy, safe, and clean they leave with a great picture of the organization. A lot of recent referrals have come from individuals unhappy about the program that they are in and the support coordinator pass along the information for Next Step Ministries.

The hardships that the organization has faced have been people within the Cherokee County community knowing what Next Step Ministries does specifically, taking in clients with profound needs. It is very specialized, the organization doing tube feeding, suctioning, taking care of seizure protocols, and more. It is difficult for the community to understand the value of

the services offered by Next Step Ministries. This organization is the only facility to accept these clients in the metro Atlanta area. Instead, the organization gets put in the same category as those that help higher functioning, but they are two separate areas of expertise.

### **Resource Feasibility of Project**

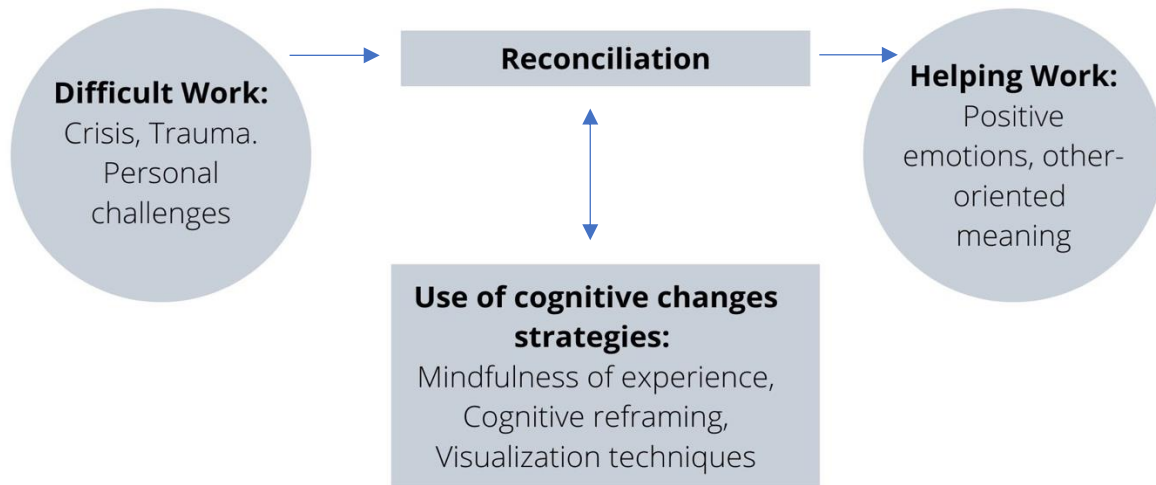
This has been a project that the researcher has wanted to accomplish throughout her time as an employee of Next Step Ministries. However, until attending Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College for the MLD program the knowledge to build such a program was not available. With the knowledge of the courses and individuals that the researcher has aligned with this project is feasible for Next Step Ministries. Not only for the research to be done but a plan of action to make this onboarding program a reality at this nonprofit. The researcher has the support of the organization's leadership team and board of directors to put this capstone project to use. After this project is defended there will be a meeting scheduled with those individuals to approve it as a proper onboarding and orientation of Next Step Ministries.

### **Constraints**

One of the biggest constraints this project will have is that old habits are hard to break. Being a small organization, Next Step Ministries has leadership team members wearing many different hats and when doing so timelines can slip. It will be very important that the leadership and training team stick to the schedule whenever new employees are hired; even if the new employee is greatly needed on the floor at that time. "These inefficient practices which may have originated from good intentions can spread and become embodied in an organization for decades, often established by people long since gone, but unchallenged because, like bad habits, managers fail to recognize their negative effects" ("Breaking Bad Habits", 2018).

The next constraint that could be found is that this takes time to develop and put this quality program together. It needs full attention and as it has been said before, full attention is not always available like it should be. This is why a well-developed leadership and training team is needed in place before this project is put to the test.

Lastly, a constraint could be veteran employees not supporting this change and making it difficult for the organization to grow in this positive way. It will also take every person to help with the new program in their own assigned way. This may be being a mentor, teaching a specific skill to a new individual, or being a positive face in the organization. Some may see this as one more thing they have to do. To successfully roll out this project every person in the organization needs to be taken through this new program. It will ensure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to expectations and rules. This will be hard for the veteran since a few are stuck in their ways and will not be happy that Next Step Ministries is requiring to change the way they think. It will also require that each individual has a positive attitude. This will be a team effort. It will be critical that Next Step Ministries talks this program up to veteran staff and how their part is extremely important to not only future employee's future but the organization's future. It is the organization's responsibility to set these individuals up for success. There is a paradox that can be used where employers talk with employees about what is difficult to do in the workplace and how they help make a positive change as seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** “Reconciliation as a bridge in explaining the paradox” (Flinchbaugh & Schwoerer & May, 2017).

### SWOT Analysis

Below one will find a SWOT Analysis analyzing the onboarding program for Next Step Ministries. A SWOT analysis shows strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the launch of the new programs. The strengths that were found are that there will be an increase in employee engagement as well as an increase in the retention of employees. This kind of program would also help organize for growth, as well as have a staff that is knowledgeable in what they are doing. The weaknesses that are seen would include the dedicated time it takes for staff to accomplish a proper onboarding program. It takes time from both the new hire as well as the new employee being trained. There is also a need to be flexible to change, this change could be in

regard to client changes and protocol updates. Lastly, there is a weakness when it comes to needing a budget to fulfill this onboarding program. There are not a lot of extra funds for Next Step Ministries to use so at times this could be tough on the program. There are many opportunities that can be found when it comes to this program. These opportunities include employees grow internally and externally for the organization, new employees are trained correctly and that the mentor program will help the employees' bond together. Another opportunity is that it supports the program's increase of clients as well as better branding. The two threats found are that Next Step Ministries is not able to compete in today's hiring market. A lot of retail businesses are in competition when it comes to employees due to the fact that someone looking for a job can go to a fast food restaurant or a retail store and get a better hourly wage and benefits from the start. Next Step Ministries pays over minimum wage; however, it still doesn't compare to other markets. The second threat is that this program can be very time consuming and there may be days or periods where it is hard to stop what the organization is doing when a new hire wants to start. If the organization lets this threat become reality it could stop the organization from growing in a positive manor due to the staff not being properly trained. (See Figure 2)



**Figure 2:** Onboarding Program SWOT Analysis

### Resource Requirements and Budget

#### Budget

The budget for Next Step Ministries' onboarding process is broken down into two categories; subscriptions and training. Under subscriptions, there are Sandbox and Relias which are both software that Next Step Ministries has used when training new employees. Sandbox is where the administration can file paperwork electronically, time stamp, and keep information about employees up to date. Relias is a software that has training courses that cover everything from transfers, infectious control, and administrative skills. Next Step Ministries picks ten and a half hours of initial training and requires fifteen hours per year. Both of these services have a standard price monthly cost. Sandbox is used by three different programs. Each program pays for

a third of the cost since each is using it. During the first week, it is required to complete ten and a half hours of classes that are picked by Next Step Ministries and fifteen hours are required for continuing education each year. After the orientation, employees get to choose what classes they wish to take. Training is CPR/ AED Training, conferences, and any opportunity that may come up during the year. An example may be Leadercast, a conference held each year that helps train leaders in organizations of all sizes. This also has the breakdown of what each person in the training will cost the company; including the trainer and new employees.

When wanting to add a project such as a new onboarding program to Next Step Ministries, there needs to be a budget for the individual that is going to be setting it up and training individuals for such a program. This individual has the following breakdown:

$$\$17.00/\text{hour} = \$1,360$$

Allow 80 hours of full attention devoted to the release of the onboarding and orientation program.

This same individual, who is responsible for training new employees will devote 3 days of training (24 hours) to each individual. The trainer will be paid \$408 per employee trained. The employees coming in has a wage of \$12 per hour with this each employee will be paid \$288 the first three days of training.

**Budget Table**

**2020 (Addition of 5 New Hire)**

<b>Subscription</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Yearly</b>
Sandbox	\$ 24.75	\$ 297.00
Relias	\$ 250.00	\$ 3,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 274.75</b>	<b>\$ 3,297.00</b>

<b>Training</b>	<b>Per Emp</b>	<b>Yearly</b>
New Hire Pay During Training	\$ 288.00	\$ 1,440.00
Trainer Pay	\$ 408.00	\$ 2,040.00

CPR/AED	\$ 50.00	\$ 250.00
Total	\$ 746.00	\$ 3,730.00

Final Total:	\$ 1,020.75	\$ 7,027.00
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**2021 (Addition of 7 New Hires)**

Subscription	Monthly	Yearly
Sandbox	\$ 24.75	\$ 297.00
Relias	\$ 250.00	\$ 3,000.00
Total	\$ 274.75	\$ 3,297.00

Training	Per Emp	Yearly
New Hire Pay During Training	\$ 288.00	\$ 2,016.00
Trainer Pay	\$ 408.00	\$ 2,856.00
CPR/AED	\$ 50.00	\$ 350.00
Total	\$ 746.00	\$ 5,222.00

Final Total	\$ 1,020.75	\$ 8,519.00
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**2022 (Addition of 9 New Hires)**

Subscription	Monthly	Yearly
Sandbox	\$ 24.75	\$ 297.00
Relias	\$ 250.00	\$ 3,000.00
Total	\$ 274.75	\$ 3,297.00

Training	Per Emp	Yearly
New Hire Pay during Training	\$ 288.00	\$ 2,592.00
Trainer Pay	\$ 408.00	\$ 3,672.00
CPR/AED	\$ 50.00	\$ 450.00
Total	\$ 746.00	\$ 6,714.00

Final Total	\$ 1,020.75	\$ 10,011.00
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**Summary**

One observation the researcher made was just how important onboarding is no matter what business one is in. There are so many ways that an onboarding program can be put together,



but they all have the same bone structure in timeline, getting to know the staff, and learning what the new employee's position is. What makes it unique to the organization is the specific training. When the researcher first started the research into onboarding and orientations it was thought of as a very small program that Next Step Ministries desperately needs. However, now after looking closer at what not having a proper program would do to the organization; it is seen as a necessary component for growth. It also shows that this is not the small addition to the program that the researcher originally thought. Developing the program for Next Step Ministries requires a team effort to be successful. Other individuals within the organization can be responsible for parts of the onboarding process. It also helps that there was research to show the staff members that to make it successful it will be a full team effort. The research showed that new employees can gain more from multiple people than being stuck in a single room talking to one individual.

This also showed the researcher how to put together a timeline for the process. Training does not have to be rushed through and can even take multiple days to even months. It is still believed within the organization at Next Step Ministries that training should last a day, maybe two days. This thesis shows this belief is not true.

### **Action Plan**

This research will be presented to the Board of Directors at Next Step Ministries along with the current staff members. The budget presented in this research will need to be approved by the Board of Directors. A team of staff will be appointed to take charge of the onboarding process outlined; this will include the trainer, Executive Director, office manager, and mentors.

### Appendix A-Onboarding Training Schedule



## Next Step Ministries: Onboarding Training Schedule

### Day One:

9:30 am	Meet with Trainer
10:00 am	Tour of facility and meet staff members
11:00 am	Read Employee Handbook Watch modules of Employee Handbook
11:30 am	Introduction to Relias Trainer walk through of how to use Relias
1:00 pm	Break for lunch
1:30pm	Continue Relias Training
6:00 pm	Day One Finished

### Day Two:

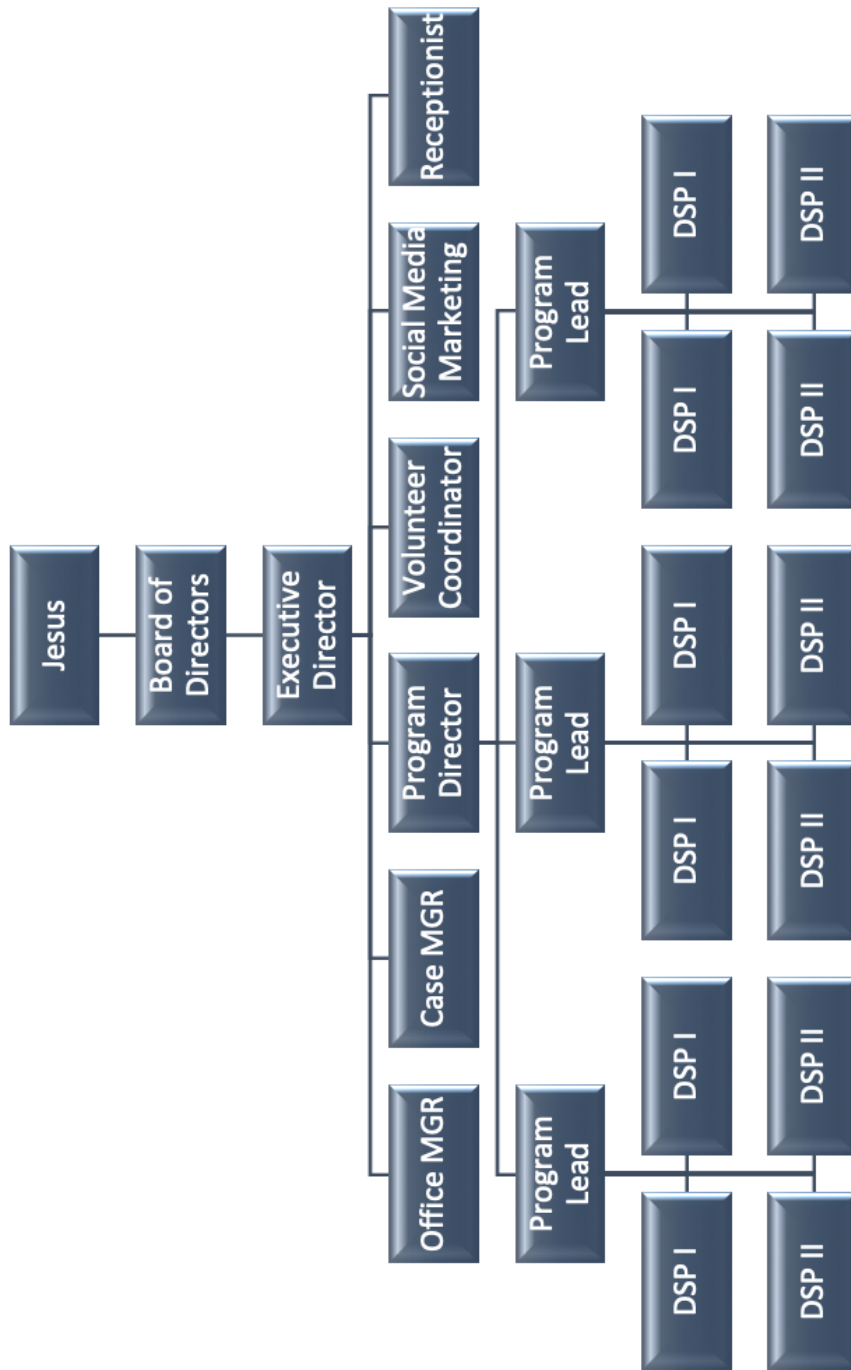
9:30am	Meet with assigned mentor
10:00 am	Start Relias training
1:00 pm	Break for lunch
2:30 pm	Meet with team and clients Shadow program
4:00 pm	Assist with closing duties
6:00 pm	Day two finished

### Day Three:

9:30am	Welcome to the Family Meet with founder
10:30 am	Finish up any Relias training As needed
11:30 am	Go over protocols
1:00 pm	Break for lunch
1:30 pm	Finish the day working with clients and getting to know the routine of the day
6:30 pm	Day three finished

\*\*Note that times are subject to change depending on computer knowledge of new hire. \*\*

**Appendix B-Next Step Ministries Organizational Chart**



### Appendix C-Big 5 Performance Review



#### Big 5 Regularly Scheduled 1:1 Performance Review Meetings to Discuss Accomplishments and Upcoming Goals

**Employee Name:**

**Job Title:**

**Department:**

**Supervisor**

**Date:**

Big 5 is a simplified performance review process that entails regularly scheduled 1:1 meeting between employees and their director supervisor to discuss accomplishments and upcoming goals. The meetings are held at least every 3 months, and Big 5 asks employees and managers to focus on two questions during these meetings: (1) What are your 5 most significant accomplishments since our last meeting? And, (2) What are your 5 biggest goals until next time?

**Instructions:** This form is for employees to document their Big 5 accomplishments and upcoming goals and send to their supervisor prior to each Big 5 meeting. Also, if employees have supportive information about their accomplishments, it's a great idea to attach that information along with this form and send to their supervisor prior to meeting.

MY 5 MOST SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE OUR LAST MEETING:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

MANAGER COMMENTS:

MY 5 BIGGEST GOALS UNTIL NEXT TIME:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

MANAGER COMMENTS:

**SIGNATURES** (to be signed after the discussion once there is approval from the supervisor on proposed upcoming goals)

EMPLOYEE:

DATE:

SUPERVISOR:

DATE:

### **Appendix D-Employee Acknowledgement**

#### **EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HANDBOOK**

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the employee handbook. I understand and recognize that there may be changes to the information, policies and benefits in the handbook. I understand that Next Step Ministries may add new policies to the handbook as well as replace, change, or cancel existing policies. I understand that I will be told about any handbook changes and I understand that handbook changes can only be authorized Next Step Ministries management.

I understand that I became an employee of Next Step Ministries voluntarily. I understand and acknowledge that there is no specified length to my employment and that my employment is at will. I understand and acknowledge that “at will” means that I may terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. I also understand and acknowledge that “at will” means that Next Step Ministries may terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice, as long as they do not violate federal or state laws.

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with all policies included within the employee handbook. I further understand that I should consult my supervisor regarding any questions I may have.

<b>Employee Signature</b>	
_____	_____
Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____
Printed Name	Employee Representative

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