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Project work: restructuration and implementation of an onboarding program

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Master in Management

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Resumo

Nos últimos anos, tem-se assistido a um crescimento do grau de importância dos processos e práticas de recursos humanos que dizem respeito às atitudes dos colaboradores e ao desempenho das organizações. Neste sentido, tornou-se vital estudar estes processos e práticas que influenciam toda a experiência do colaborador e que começam no seu primeiro dia numa dada organização. De modo a assegurar a eficaz integração de um novo colaborador, os programas de integração – práticas iniciadas por parte da organização ou pelos seus agentes, que facilitam a integração ou indução de um novo colaborador na sua nova função – estão a ganhar particular importância e interesse nas empresas e as equipas de recursos humanos estão também elas neste momento a alterar o paradigma, vendo estes programas de integração como investimentos e não como custos para as organizações.

À luz do exposto, foi desenhado e realizado um piloto de um programa de integração para uma empresa do setor segurador. Este piloto foi testado em vinte novos colaboradores e os seus efeitos foram avaliados através de um questionário online, de modo a estimar e compreender o grau de satisfação com o mesmo, bem como outras opiniões. Os resultados obtidos mostram um grande aumento na satisfação com o programa piloto, quando comparado com o anterior programa de integração desta empresa, especialmente no que se refere à satisfação dos novos colaboradores com a sua integração, função e compreensão da empresa como um todo. Para além disso, este programa piloto conseguiu ainda melhorar consideravelmente a experiência do colaborador.

Palavras-chave: experiência do colaborador, indução, novo colaborador, integração.
JEL Classification System: J24   Human Capital; Skills; Occupational Choice; Labor Productivity; M54   Labor Management.

Abstract

Over the last few years, human resources systems that link human resources practices, people's attitudes and organizations' performances, are growing in terms of importance and, consequently, investment in organizations. In this sense, it became interesting to study how these human resources systems or practices influence the whole employee experience, which starts on day one of any new hire. In order to ensure a proper integration and induction of a newcomer, onboarding programs – the specific practices initiated by an organization or its agents to facilitate employee adjustment to new roles – are gaining each day more relevance in organizations and Human Resources teams are now changing the paradigm of seeing induction programs as an investment rather than a cost.

In the light of this, a pilot onboarding program was designed and executed for a company operating in the insurance sector. Moreover, this pilot program was tested on twenty newcomers and evaluated through an online survey, in order to assess their satisfaction and opinion. The results showed a great increase in terms of satisfaction, when comparing to the previous onboarding program, especially when we talk about onboarding and job satisfaction, understanding the company and the new role in it. Furthermore, the employee experience was also improved for these newcomers.

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Introduction

After spending one year working as a Human Resources Junior Consultant at an IT company, I found out the huge impact that onboarding programs may have in the whole employee experience and, consequently, in talent retention and job satisfaction. It is a relatively new concept and it can be defined as the process that supports new hires to adjust to social and performance aspects of their new jobs (Bauer, 2010; Meyer & Bartels, 2017).

The theme of this project focuses mainly on the human resources area that regards the integration and induction of newcomers into companies. Which is only possible throughout robust, innovative and well-defined onboarding programs.

Normally, this kind of programs are perceived as human resources costs that cut profits to organizations. However, recent studies and cases are showing that onboarding programs are boosting organizations' profits and consolidating their competitive advantage in the market. These smart and strategic investments are the ones that support a great employee experience and organizational benefits (Stanley, 2012; Caldwell & Peters, 2018).

In what concerns the Portuguese reality, onboarding is, in many cases, being linked only with the act of signing up a contract, greeting someone new in the hall or a two hours class session explaining the company's history and main processes, which, for one day, is a lot of information that it is not completely absorbed by newcomers, that feel overwhelmed during the first few days at the organization (Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011). The main problem is that most organizations do not see as an important aspect to provide a proper onboarding to facilitate socialization in order for talent to be retained and for benefits to be achieved by both employee and organization. People have the necessity and right, from the first day of work, to be well welcomed. And that starts with a robust and disruptive onboarding program.

For the past twenty years, human resources systems that link human resources practices, people's attitudes and organizations' performances, are being given a lot of attention and, consequently, investment. However, these are hard findings and cannot be, as history showed us, generalized (Cesário & Chambel, 2019). In fact, what works for a given company, may not work quite the same way for another, because companies, people, processes and cultures are different, so managers have the duty to customize and adapt their actions according to the context in which they are (Lepak & Snell, 1999; Marchington & Grugulis, 2000; Cesário & Chambel, 2019). That is why this onboarding program will be specific to one company.

In the light of the literature and the main objective of this thesis, it became important to study what strategies or initiatives must be implemented in an onboarding program. Therefore,

these practices must influence, in a positive way, the employee experience, the employee and organization's performance and the retention of talent. From a warm welcoming, to a well thought welcome kit, several crucial practices were identified in order to design an onboarding program.

In this sense, I aimed, inserted in a team – Team O – to redesign and implement a pilot onboarding program, that has as main goal to contribute for a great employee experience and talent retention in an insurance company (Company A, due to confidentiality issues). Company A realized that a change of paradigm was needed, so that onboarding would not be seen as a two hours session of transmitting information to a new hire, but rather an opportunity for newcomers to see and understand the company as a whole and how they could develop themselves inside the company.

Regarding the methodology used, this thesis is a qualitative study that supports itself in a real case or project. It also studies and compares what it is being done in the market, through benchmarking and document analysis, which ultimately, supported the restructuration and implementation of the pilot onboarding program. After newcomers experienced this pilot program, it became important to evaluate their satisfaction, what they learnt and how they felt. Therefore, a questionnaire was constructed and delivered to them, but not only to them. It also became important to compare the results with the employees that experienced the old onboarding program. So, the same questionnaire was handed up to them to compare the results.

This thesis is organized by chapters, including firstly a literature review about the main topics under analysis, secondly the methodology in which this work is characterized as an action research, thirdly the findings and results, based on the different instruments used, fourthly the onboarding project made for Company A and that allowed this work to prove that onboarding is an important human resources practice that provides a great employee experience, a faster integration and potentiates talent retention and better performers. Finally, the fifth chapter holds the main conclusions of this thesis.

Chapter 1 – Literature Review

1.1. Onboarding Defined

Originally, onboarding was a term used in organizations to refer to orientation, especially of managers and executives (Gordon, 1999; Klein & Polin, 2012). Nowadays, it is a much broader concept that affects all new employees of a particular organization, being orientation just a part of an onboarding program.

From general knowledge, companies hire talented people. The ones that have the potential to bring the most benefits to the company. What companies often do not do, is to emerge those newcomers into their culture, values, vision, missions, processes, policies, objectives and so on. People want and also have the right, from the first day of work, to feel welcomed, and that is only possible through a structured and disruptive onboarding program. Actually, ineffective or superficial onboarding practices, only potentiate the destruction of the benefits of hiring talented people, not to mention the hours invested in their recruitment and selection process (Smart, 2012; Caldwell & Peters, 2018). So, what is the purpose of onboarding?

The main goal of onboarding is to support new hires understanding the organization's policies, procedures, mission and culture. In addition, onboarding has the purpose of supporting socialization activities, such as introducing newcomers to the organization and to their teams and colleagues (Moon, 2017; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

Nowadays, in many companies, onboarding programs are seen as costs rather than investments. However, these practices are smart and strategic investments that lead to talent retention, great work environments and people's motivation in every daily task (Stanley, 2012; Caldwell & Peters, 2018). It is on day one that the psychological contract is built between newcomer and organization and a structured onboarding might consolidate it (Caldwell & Peters, 2018).

Recent studies, define onboarding as the process of introducing and inducting a new employee into his or her new job and role; familiarizing the employee with the organization's goals, values, rules, policies, and processes; as well as socializing the employee into the organizational culture (Watkins, 2016; Caldwell & Peters, 2018). But there is an interesting perspective regarding the onboarding process. Studies also came to the conclusion that companies, when onboarding new employees, are more focused on themselves and in the future outcomes, rather than in the newcomers, which should be the main focus of any onboarding program (Bauer, 2010; Snell, 2006; Caldwell & Peters; 2018)

Moreover, many companies were or still are providing overwhelming or impractical information, that becomes almost impossible for newcomers to learn everything in just one day (Bradt & Vonnegut, 2009; Caldwell & Peters, 2018)

Furthermore, the study conducted by Caldwell and Peters (2018), stated that an effective onboarding process included four critical building blocks to improve performance, talent retention, job satisfaction and motivation (Bauer, 2010). These four blocks refer to the legal, performance, cultural and relational dimensions of a given organization (Bauer, 2010).

Table 1.1 – the four critical building blocks to improve performance, inoculate against turnover, and increase job satisfaction

Compliance	Clarification	Culture	Connection
This building block is the lowest level of onboarding and includes reviewing or teaching employees about basic legal and policy-related rules and regulations associated with working in the new organization.	This key function ensures that employees understand their new jobs and all its related expectations. Frequently, this function is poorly handled and lacks specificity.	Providing employees with a sense of formal and informal organizational norms are often overlooked, because members of the organization assume that the organization's values, assumptions, and norms are easily understood.	This key activity refers to creating vital interpersonal relationships and explaining information networks essential for employees to perform successfully.

Font: Bauer (2010)

According to Bauer's theory and study, almost all organizations cover the first level when it comes to onboarding – Compliance. However, only 50% of organizations practice the Clarification and Culture blocks. Not surprisingly, only 20% of organizations proactively reach the Connection level, and more easily, through a strategic human resources management approach. These four levels inevitably impact the perceived organizational support, commitment and job satisfaction (Bauer, 2010).

Although there exists this performance improving theory of the four building blocks, few companies use their full scope and offer an appropriate onboarding program to induct new employees into the company (Acevedo & Yancey, 2011; Caldwell & Peters, 2018). This is another evidence that onboarding programs, in many companies, are still seen as an expense.

In case of a well performed onboarding program, short and long-term benefits can be achieved for both newcomers and organizations, such as great job fulfilment and commitment, talent retention, higher productivity and higher compliance (Bauer, 2010; Caldwell & Peters, 2018).

Complementing the previous idea, the most important approach is allowing newcomers to fully apply their skills, competencies, capacities and abilities (Holton, 2001). However, most organizations believe in tight managerial control systems, rather than empowering people.

In the light of an analysis performed in 2019 by Cesário and Chambel that analyzed Klein and Polin's (2012) study, onboarding refers to the specific practices initiated by an organization or its agents to facilitate employee adjustment to new roles. From the employee's perspective, an effective onboarding process contributes to a faster alignment with the company's culture, mission, vision, values and objectives; to reduce the employee's insecurity and anxiety about not meeting the company's expectations for his performance; to strength the employee's acclimation to the workplace environment; and, overall, to acquire the desired or necessary attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge (Cesário & Chambel, 2019).

These two previous authors also affirm that human resources priorities in the present and for the future regard talent attraction and retention. They based this conclusion in three studies – BCG, 2013; CIPD, 2015; Deloitte, 2015 – that came to the finding that companies are still trying to attract and retain talent based on aggressive performance-related rewards, training, job rotation, mentoring, coaching or shadowing practices. Which is fine and of extreme importance, but the problem is in the point of departure. Of course, it all starts in the first stage of the recruitment and selection process, nonetheless it is that first day that leaves a mark in every single employee. Besides, it is of major importance to induct people into the work environment, which is only achievable through a robust onboarding program, customized for each organization and, if needed, different according to the recruited position (Kumar & Pandey, 2017; Cesário & Chambel, 2019; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

In addition, Shufutinsky and Cox (2019) do not dismiss the importance of a one-day onboarding session, in fact, they claim it is essential. However, it is not enough to provide a top of the edge employee experience. So, a broader range of aspects must be considered, as previously analyzed.

1.2. The Importance of Onboarding

Onboarding is not just about signing up a contract, greeting some new hire in the hall or offering a good career perspective. It is something much more personal. We are talking about newcomers: people that have just arrived at a given company and can have a huge impact in it, but first, it is important to provide a proper onboarding to facilitate socialization in order for talent to be retained and for the benefits to be achieved by both parts.

Nowadays, onboarding starts being linked to the construction and maintenance of organizational culture, which is one of a kind in each organization and has its impact in terms of achieving competitive advantage and outstanding results (Coff & Kryscynski, 2011; Klein & Polin, 2012). However, inducting newcomers into an organization´s culture can be a dangerous thing, because there is the risk of people conforming very soon with the reality they find, leading up to the lack of critical thinking or fear of asking why, which may cause dissatisfaction and will to rapidly leave the organization (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013, 2013b; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019). To avoid this, onboarding should start on day one of any new hire, engaging and involving newcomers to develop self-identity, perspectives, and individual strengths (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

From the theoretical point of view, it is being said that onboarding supports employee socialization, which is the process of integrating a newcomer into a given company. In fact, through onboarding, employees gain an understanding of the goals, responsibilities and legal implications of their roles, within the greater structure of the organization (Meyer & Bartels, 2017).

Moreover, onboarding contributes to the whole employee experience in many different levels. Effective onboarding is positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, engagement, performance and inversely related to turnover (Cable, Gino, & Staats, 2013; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Lavigna, 2009; Snell, 2006; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). Additionally, there are some key aspects and factors that contribute for job satisfaction and talent retention. Among those aspects, a study concluded that the way people are brought into organizations, inducted, developed and perceive organizational membership, dictates how long and in what way or terms they are going to stay at the company (Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

A research from 2014, concerning knowledge transfer in terms of onboarding, revealed this is only successful if newcomers have access to different sources of knowledge, regarding processes, tasks, procedures and company culture for instance (Viana, Conte & de Souza, 2014; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). This will help new hires to be more successful in their daily tasks, as well as integrate them better into the team and organization, influencing the whole employee experience and, consequently, increasing the employee's commitment towards the organization – organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment is now one of the most desirable aspects for an organization, in order for talent to be retained. But this must be something that it is built right from the start, through structured, innovative and unique onboarding practices and socialization tactics, especially when those practices are applied in group (Bauer, Bodnar, Erdogan, Truxillo, &

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Tucker, 2007; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). Furthermore, it is important for newcomers to have role models inside the organization or their teams, as well as receiving positive and constructive feedback. Accordingly, it is no surprise that the concept of social support has the highest importance when onboarding newcomers, so social interactions and socialization tactics play a very important role in this matter (Bauer, 2010; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). So, the figure of a buddy might be an effective answer for this aspect.

Moreover, according to Meyer and Bartels (2017), employees who receive a more efficient and effective onboarding, feel not only a better person-organization fit, but also a much higher organizational commitment throughout their experience.

Furthermore, effective socialization practices, aligned with great talent management processes, potentiate benefits for both employee (role clarity, job satisfaction, self-confidence, career involvement, career effectiveness and personal income) and organization (productivity, organizational commitment, job involvement, role orientation and tenure) (Bauer, Morrison & Callister 1998; Feldman 1981; Fisher 1986; Saks & Ashforth 1997; Klein & Heuser 2008; Klein & Polin, 2012). All of this may be a key element in terms of newcomers, internal mobility and job promotions (Klein & Polin, 2012).

Additionally, it is expected for a company to grow its business and projects throughout time, so at some point in the future, these newcomers will be responsible for that growth, either by leading a project or just by implementing effective and innovative processes in the company that boost the development of the company as a whole. But for this to happen, people need proper onboarding, they need to feel integrated, motivated and most of all, they need to know what it is expected from them.

Another important aspect of effective onboarding is that it can mitigate or even eliminate the natural anxiety and fear that newcomers often feel in a new organization. It is also important for new hires to understand the new surroundings and environment, in order for them to become organizational members and fully inducted into their teams and roles (Moon, 2017).

Regarding the relationship between onboarding and talent retention, although there are not many researches on that field, there exists some evidences that the two are connected. A structured step-by-step onboarding program supports newcomers in their integration and in becoming organizational members, leading up to their possible retention (Chapman, 2009; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019). Additionally, onboarding boosts the relationship between employer and employee, which leads to a higher performance from the employee since day one and, consequently, in the employee's will to stay (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013b; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

So, onboarding programs, as history showed us, are a crucial practice in terms of talent management, leading to high performance levels, job satisfaction, talent retention and competitive advantage (Kumar & Pandey, 2017; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

1.3. Socialization in Onboarding

It is now important to define the concept of socialization, since it plays a major role in any onboarding process. Initially, socialization was being linked to the transmission, to newcomers, of information regarding organizational values, processes, mission, vision, norms and regulations (Holton, 1996; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). It has as main goal, to develop a common identity and the creation of a sense of belongingness, when transferring knowledge regarding the organization's politics, procedures, language, tone, values, mission, history and vision (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011).

Furthermore, socialization can also be defined as the process through which newcomers move from being organizational outsiders to becoming organizational insiders (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010; Klein & Polin, 2012). Nevertheless, authors such as Klein and Polin (2012), disagree that the terms socialization and onboarding can be put in the same topic. They believe that these two concepts are different and define onboarding as all formal and informal practices, programs and policies enacted or engaged in by an organization or its agents to facilitate a newcomer adjustment and enable the induction of a new employee.

Nowadays, onboarding regards what organizations and its agents do. Onboarding is a set of practices, policies or procedures that are put in place by managers and Human Resources teams, in order to facilitate the socialization of newcomers and boost the proactivity of them. On the one hand, onboarding practices, polices or procedures reduces newcomers' uncertainty, job ambiguity and anxiety that may arise from the first few weeks at the new job (Allen, 2006; Berger, 1979; Carr, Pearson Vest & Boyar, 2006; Klein & Polin, 2012). On the other hand, onboarding programs should develop, in a strong way, the social capital of an organization, as well as build solid relationships (Fang, Duffy & Shaw, 2011; Rollag, Parise & Cross, 2005; Klein & Polin, 2012). With this being said, onboarding is the process of newcomers becoming organizational members (Klein, Polin, & Sutton, 2015; Moon, 2017).

To sum up, socialization is an ongoing process, that occurs both within and across organizations and whenever there occurs changes, in terms of roles, tasks, or job contexts (Feldman, 1989; Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Klein & Polin, 2012). On the other hand, onboarding happens in a pre-established period of time, during the integration

of newcomers, which can go from hours to months, within a specific organization (Klein & Polin, 2012).

These two concepts may have started as two independent ones, but as history and research showed us, they are now complementary and indispensable to any onboarding program.

1.4. Onboarding Practices

Usually, onboarding activities and practices tend to be reactive and rushed, with no plan attached to them what's so ever. When organizations see onboarding and socialization practices this way, it makes it difficult for newcomers to have a positive employee experience. Onboarding practices must be planned and organized, in order for the induction of new hires to be effective (Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011). A more recent study affirms that the final goal of onboarding activities is to use members' individual activities to lead to organizational socialization and induction (Moon, 2017).

According to a study from 2011, 90% of new employees make their decision of staying at an organization within the first six months of employment (Aberdeen Research, 2006), which influences the point of time when the newcomer will achieve the optimal contribution, (figure 1.1). More recently, other studies verify this problem. Organizations invest a lot in terms of recruiting talented people, but not that much in onboarding them, making people leave organizations within months, if not days (Krasman, 2015; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019). If employees leave in the first few weeks or months, this represents replacement costs, that can range from twenty to two hundred and fifty percent of that employee's annual salary (Cascio, 2000; Petrucelli, 2017; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019), besides the loss of hours transmitting information to that employee and other cultural factors that are more difficult to calculate (Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019). This is another reason why an effective onboarding program is so important for both employee and organization.
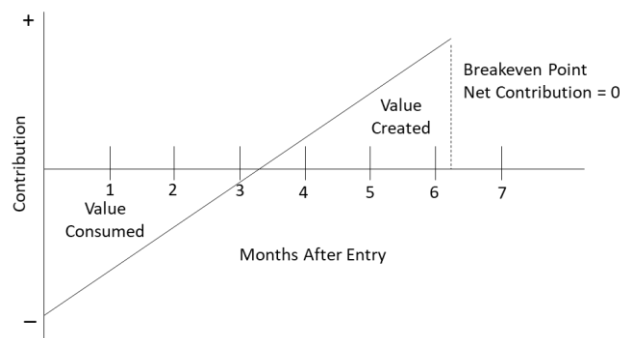

Figure 1.1 – The breakeven point following a newcomer's entry into an organization.
Font: Dai, Meuse and Gaeddert (2011, p. 167)

In this sense, it is crucial for organizations to start the effective integration and induction of a newcomer as soon as possible, throughout active onboarding practices, that facilitate the transition of employees to a new company and role (Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011). Furthermore, if onboarding practices are being effective on newcomers, this will lead to happier employees and, consequently, better performance levels and results for the organization (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

Normally, the newcomer starts with the orientation period, followed by the induction into the new organization and role, which should take from three to six months (depending on the job) (Lee, 2006; Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011). However, it is important to measure how effective the onboarding practices were on the newcomer. So, it became important to develop some indicators to quantify the whole process. In this sense, Conger and Fishel (2008) proposed two: (a) engagement and retention of the new hire, and (b) time to productivity. Nevertheless, in order for these indicators to have acceptable values, organizations must not see onboarding as a check list of disconnected activities and practices, but rather have a plan that transfers to newcomers the pretended and needed information in a timely and structured way (Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011). For this onboarding plan to happen and for this to be seen as an opportunity to retain and engage talent, it becomes highly important to attribute ownership to some people in the Human Resources department, as well as to the hiring managers (Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011).

For the past few years, researchers and authors such as Snell, Conger, Fishel, among others, have been studying what could be some of the best onboarding practices. Of course, each organization is one of a kind, but there are practices or tools that can be a solid base for each onboarding program. Firstly, it is suggested that onboarding should be integrated into the hiring management process and extended to the first six months of the employee's new job (Snell, 2006; Aberdeen Research, 2006; Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011). Secondly, and also according to Aberdeen Research of 2008, organizations should take advantage of web-based technology, in order for onboarding processes and activities to be automated and effective. Last but not least, it is of the highest importance for the Human Resources department to take ownership of the process and to involve senior leadership, key stakeholders and multiple resources into the induction of newcomers (Wells, 2005; Conger & Fishel, 2008; Dai, Meuse & Gaeddert, 2011).

According to Moon (2017), onboarding practices and activities should be inserted into a three-step approach: Information, Welcoming and Guidance.

- Firstly, the Information step. In order for information and knowledge to be transferred for newcomers, it becomes important to facilitate communication across the whole

organization, through resources that also enable the initial learning and development, that, consequently, give opportunities to new employees to learn faster the skills and competencies that allow for adjustments to the organizational reality. For newcomers to perceive a welcoming message, communication tools and strategies must also be developed in terms of onboarding.

- Secondly, the Welcoming step. According to the author, a welcoming ceremony is needed, for newcomers to start feeling as organizational members, as well as aligning their goals and meeting their teams.

- Finally, the Guidance step. This phase concerns the active and direct support that newcomers need to receive when performing their activities and daily tasks. This support can come from their teams, managers, peers, among others.

In more recent studies, Carucci (2018) states that in order to retain talent, companies should spend more time and resources in onboarding. By his experience as a consultant for Fortune 500 companies, the most effective and productive organizations are the ones that onboard newcomers for the first year, which matches the most vulnerable period of newcomers. These organizations focus their onboarding programs on three key dimensions: (1) organizational, (2) technical and (3) social. In this sense, newcomers are pushed to stay at the company and to thrive.

In what concerns the organizational dimension, it is important to teach how the organization works and what new employees will need to do and know on the daily basis. These things are so simple as knowing where to park the car or how to get to the company, how to get the ID card, what are the main locals on the building, which benefits can they access and how, among other policies and regulations. Besides this, new employees need to know and how to speak with the company's tone and language. This last one refers to the several acronyms that all organizations naturally must deal on the daily tasks, and the sooner newcomers have access to them the better. Another important step in this dimension, is to help new hires to assimilate the absorbed knowledge. For this, from time to time and during the first year, managers should engage in a conversation with newcomers regarding the organization's history, values, brand, how performance appraisal is conducted and possible career perspectives. In this phase, it is important for newcomers to identify themselves with the company, and nothing better than having key references inside, to demonstrate an exemplar behavior.

The second dimension – technical – tells us that new employees need to know, from day one, what it is expected from them, not only in terms of results, but also in terms of what competencies and capabilities they need to demonstrate in order to reach the desired outcomes.

This can be obtained if newcomers are delivered with the complete job description and available resources to accomplish an outstanding performance. Furthermore, newcomers may feel some shyness at first, so it becomes vital to engage on a weekly coaching session with them, in order to ensure at least one opportunity to value their contributions. Besides these and being the first year the most vulnerable one for new employees, it is central to set up early wins. Managers should define goals for newcomers to reach them within three, six and nine-month marks. Carucci (2018) advises managers to start with goals that they know almost for sure that new hires are going to accomplish and then start making more ambitious ones. With this, newcomers will feel more confident, valued and with a much richer experience. Based on this trust, this will also allow for managers to discuss with newcomers what they need to improve in order to become top performers.

Finally, the social dimension. In here, the key factor is to build a sense of community, to build strong relationships and to fully integrate newcomers into their teams, roles and organization. In this process, the support of managers is crucial and they should help new employees to identify seven to ten people – superiors, peers, direct reports, and internal and external customers – whose success may depend on one another. They should then plan how they are going to interact with each stakeholder in the most effective way possible, either through a phone-call or even through a coffee or lunch. Sometimes, the simple activities are the most effective ones. The important issue here is to fully induct and retain newcomers into their new organizations.

1.5. Main Conclusions

As aforementioned, companies are only now changing the paradigm of seeing onboarding practices as investments, rather than costs, that benefit both employees and organization – job satisfaction, talent retention, higher productivity, job commitment, among others. In fact, organizations that invest time, effort and resources into newcomers, often collect the benefits of it and, at the same time, provide an incredible employee experience (Carucci, 2018).

The main goal of onboarding is to integrate and induct newcomers into their new roles and organizational culture, through well-planned socialization practices (Moon, 2017; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019), that also empower people's competencies and capabilities (Holton, 2001). Moreover, each organization is different, so it requires different approaches in what human resources practices concern. In this sense, each company needs a customized and specific onboarding program, because cultures, objectives and people are different (Kumar & Pandey, 2017; Cesário & Chambel, 2019; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

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Furthermore, one of the most desirable aspects for an organization is commitment. Organizational commitment potentiates talent retention and it needs to be built on day one of any new hire, which starts precisely with onboarding practices, especially if applied in group (Bauer, Bodnar, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). In fact, organizational commitment might mean a good relationship between employee and employer, which can result in a higher motivation when doing the daily tasks, which, consequently, might result in better performances and results (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013b; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019).

To sum up, organizations ought to integrate new hires as soon as possible, throughout onboarding practices and activities, that lead to higher performances, organizational commitment and a great employee experience.

In the light of this chapter and according to the different authors and researchers mentioned, it became possible to build a pilot onboarding program that both employee and organization can benefit from and that reaches its purposes and goals, which are: to provide a great employee experience, to retain talent and to take the most out of newcomers' performances.

Chapter 2 – Methodology

To successfully achieve the objectives of this thesis, it is important to carefully explain the methodology used and what is supporting the whole project. This is nothing more than the justification of some conclusions and the reasons why some methods were used instead of others (Kothari, 2004).

It also becomes vital to clarify what type of thesis supports this work. So, this work can be considered a qualitative study supported in a case study – action research, which was a term used for the first time by Lewin in 1946 (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Regarding the action research, there are some studies on the subject, but they all have four main themes in common:

- The first theme emphasis on the purpose of the research (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). This means that the researcher is focused in the resolution of organizational problems and issues.
- The second theme concerns the involvement of practitioners in the research, partnering with the researchers. This means that it is important for the researcher to be part of the organization where the action is taking place (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).
- The third theme relates with the iterative nature of the process of diagnosing (fact finding and analysis), planning, taking action and evaluating the impacts of the actions taken (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).
- The fourth and final theme, states that a well-performed action research should have impacts and implications beyond the immediate project and in other contexts (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Summing up, action research emphasizes on the clear action that produces change in organizations, being especially useful for "how" questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). However, this change and solution-oriented method, is only possible if there exists a concrete focus on diagnosis, planning, acting and evaluating, and the involvement of an organization's employees throughout the process (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

This arises a question: why should employees be involved in the action research? As we know, change is always hard to implement in any organization or company. So, what action research does is that it involves people in the process of change, so they realize by themselves

the benefits of it, contributing for the whole process (Schein, 1999). In basic terms, change comes from within the organization.

Considering the above, Team O, had previously involved employees, through a survey, in analyzing what themes, ideas or issues made more sense for them, to be in a future onboarding program. After diagnosis, this allowed a better planning, a more effective onboarding program and, hopefully, better impacts and results.

Moreover, it is also important to explain what instruments were used to collect the data, why and who were the targets or objects of study in each one, as well as the data analysis.

2.1. Research Design and Data Collection

Regarding data collection, four instruments were used: document analysis, benchmarking, questionnaires and interview. Consequently, a pilot onboarding program was designed and implemented.

In terms of document analysis, the term "document" can refer to more than just paper, and can include photographs, works of art, and even television programs or evaluation of processes as they currently are being done (O'Leary, 2004). The same author also claims that document analysis refers to both a data collection method and a mode of analysis.

The document analysis was concentrated on several articles and the respective case studies in them, in order to better understand the current and the innovative onboarding techniques that were used and are being used nowadays, as well as analyze the results obtained. With this, it became possible to conduct some benchmarking in what concerns what companies are using right now in onboarding programs as main practices. This document analysis was also used in terms of evaluating what Company A was doing in its previous onboarding program.

Benchmarking allowed a more holistic view of onboarding in the market. From the comparison of cases, we can see which practices and processes work better in terms of engagement and talent retention and what practices are no longer effective when onboarding new employees.

In what concerns the surveys, according to O'Leary, (2004), they can be defined as information and data gathered by asking a range of individuals the same questions related to their characteristics, attributes, how they live, or their opinions. Generally, in a survey, each respondent is questioned to answer to an identical set of questions in a predetermined order at a certain point in time (De Vaus, 2002; Bailey, 2008; Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

Moreover, there exists two approaches in terms of surveys: descriptive and explanatory (Gill & Johnson, 2010; Ragab & Arisha, 2018). In this case, the approach used was descriptive,

since it aims to describe the population. Moreover, this type of approach simply counts and registers the opinions, perceptions and evaluations of the sample on specific matters, without deeply analyzing causality or understanding (Oppenheim, 1992; Ragab & Arisha, 2018). In the case of this action research, the goal was to draw conclusions on how an effective onboarding program might influence the whole employee experience and how Company A might benefit from it, based on the respondents' perceptions.

In this sense, three surveys were used: one to evaluate what themes current employees saw as important in an onboarding program, being the target the whole company. Team O had already applied and analyzed this survey before this action research and my arrival to the company. Another survey aimed to evaluate the newcomers experience in the old onboarding program, with a target of twenty. Finally, one to evaluate the newcomers experience after the pilot onboarding program, with a target also of twenty employees as well. At the end, the objective was to compare both surveys and see the differences between them, not only in terms of integration, but also in terms of performance, proving that onboarding programs should be seen as investments that boost employee experience, talent retention and job satisfaction. Altogether, it might prove that onboarding is a source of competitive advantage and great employee experience.

Furthermore and regarding the interview, it can be defined as a conversation, between two or more people, with a purpose and very useful in terms of information gathering and it is one of the most widely and holistic methods in qualitative research (Kahn & Cannell, 1957; Bryman, 2006; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Additionally, it is a method of data gathering that involves interviewers asking interviewees basically open-ended questions (O'Leary, 2004). In contrast to other procedures, interviews allow a face-to-face interaction, discussion or conversation, which is particular useful for obtaining in-depth information and new insights or ideas with a high rate of response (Kothari, 2004; Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

Interviews can be classified in terms of their level of formality: structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews (Bryman, 2012; Ragab & Arisha, 2018). However, in this action research, the one used was semi-structured interview or often refer to as qualitative research interviews (King, 2004; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009), which means that there exists a set of predetermined questions, but there is space for flexibility during the interview, to ask new questions or discard some of the predetermined ones. This type of interviews also allows for new ideas to emerge, since both interviewer and interviewee have more elasticity in the conversation (Greener, 2008; Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

Moreover, in this type of interviews, the researcher as a set of themes and questions that he would like to cover, yet this can vary from interview to interview, depending on how the discussion is developing and the context (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Based on the above, a semi-structured interview was conducted to the Manager responsible for this project, in order to infer his vision on the onboarding process, in terms of the current one and the goal for Company A.

2.2. Sample

When establishing a sample, it is important to know that this will just be a number of cases or a group of respondents, that represent the larger population, since it is impossible to collect data from the whole population (Henry, 1990; Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

Normally, the process of sampling follows five steps: (1) population definition; (2) determination of the sampling frame; (3) selection of the sampling technique; (4) size determination; and (5) execution of the sampling process (Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

Sampling techniques can be categorized in two main types: probability sampling and nonprobability sampling (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). In this case, the type used was non-probability sampling, since the selection of respondents from the whole population was not randomly made, but by the researcher instead (Greener, 2008; Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Within the nonprobability sampling, the purposive technique was used, since based on judgement, a particularly informative individuals were selected, in order for the research to meet its objectives. (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Furthermore, it is an appropriate technique due to the small selected sample (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Through online surveys, a quantitative research was conducted. The contact was made with twenty newcomers that experienced the old onboarding program of Company A and, after, twenty newcomers that experienced the pilot onboarding program, in order to compare the differences between responses and the two groups of participants.

In what the interview concerns, the sample was quite simple. The person chosen as interviewee was the Manager responsible for this project – pilot onboarding program – because it became important to understand his vision and perceptions regarding how things were being done when onboarding new employees and what practices were in fact effective. Moreover, it is important to infer why there was a need for a change and what was the main goal of the program for him. For confidentiality reasons, his name cannot be revealed.

2.3. Instruments

As previously said, two online surveys were sent to a total of forty employees, besides the one that Team O had already launched regarding the preferred themes to see when onboarding new hires. Surveys gather a great amount of quantitative data and information in an effective and economical way. These surveys had the goal to evaluate the satisfaction, engagement and opinions of newcomers with the old onboarding program of Company A and the other one to assess also about the satisfaction, engagement and thoughts of newcomers with the pilot onboarding program.

All surveys had two versions, one in Portuguese and another one in English. However, it was crucial to ensure that the surveys were coherent either in Portuguese or in English. In that sense and with the help of an English translator specialist, the Portuguese survey was translated to English. Yet, to ensure once again coherence, the already translated English survey, was then translated to Portuguese through the help of a Portuguese translator specialist. This for sure ensured the coherency between the two surveys.

Furthermore, the survey started with an introductory text about the research's academic scope, objectives of the project and expected target. Also, the text addresses the confidentiality and anonymity of the responses, in order to ensure the study's highest validity (Young, 2016). Besides, it informs about the researcher's contact information in case of any doubts or questions.

Moreover, the survey that evaluates the onboarding program and that can be seen in annex A, was a result of an extensive document analysis and benchmarking, that allowed the identification of crucial variables, reflected on the surveys, such as training, career perspectives, internal processes, team integration, dynamic themes or activities, company's business, among others. In this sense, the survey was divided into four dimensions: (1) onboarding experience, (2) job experience, (3) company's attractiveness as an employer and (4) demographic information.

The first dimension was composed by six questions. In the first question, respondents were asked what their level of agreement was towards several statements regarding their onboarding experience in their first two weeks, namely:

- The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go.
- I feel like I fit in the company culture.
- I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand my job/tasks.

- I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand the company as a whole.

- In the onboarding process, I got to know where to go to get additional assistance on personnel matters, benefits, paperwork, etc.

- I received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services.

- All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected.

- The onboarding process helped me to feel welcomed.

- I found the onboarding program interesting and interactive/dynamic.

- Overall, I am satisfied with the onboarding process.

The second question aimed to evaluate the duration of the onboarding program, whether it was too long, too short or just about right. The third question of this dimension intended to evaluate the likeliness, on a scale from one to five, of respondents to recommend Company A as an employer after the first weeks of onboarding. The fourth, fifth and sixth questions were made in an open way, since the intention was to evaluate the onboarding program from the employees' perspective in terms of what could be improved in the future.

Moreover, the second dimension was related with the job experience, and it was divided into three questions. In the first one, respondents were asked what their level of agreement was towards several statements regarding their job experience following their first two weeks of onboarding, namely:

- I was given all the necessary resources to perform my job successfully (including hardware, software, stationery, guidelines, ...).

- My goals/tasks were clearly defined.

- I have a clear understanding of my career path and perspectives/possibilities.

- I received additional training to perform my job successfully (internal systems, general operating practices, etc.).

- My supervisor provides me with regular feedback on my performance.

- The job description and recruitment process were consistent with what I am currently experiencing.

- I am proud to work for this company.

- My manager was prepared for my arrival.

- My manager checked in with me regularly to answer any questions or concerns.

- I received helpful orientation to perform my job.

- I feel integrated into my team.

- Overall, I am satisfied with my job experience so far.

The second and third questions were also made in an open way, since the intention was to evaluate the employees' perspective in what could have gone better in the weeks leading up to the new job.

Additionally, the third dimension was composed by three questions. The first one, made in an open way, just wanted to assess the number of days or weeks that respondents had been working for Company A. The second question aimed to evaluate if respondents saw themselves working in Company A in the future and, if so, in the long or short term. Finally, the third question, intended to verify the likeliness of respondents, after the onboarding experience and some weeks at the role, to recommend Company A as an employer, on a scale from one to five.

The last dimension, just intended to collect the demographic information of the respondents, regarding their department, gender, age and level of education (completed).

In order to evaluate the rating questions, these were measured through a Likert-style rating scale, in which the participants were asked at what extent did they agree or disagree with a series of statements (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009), as aforesaid. A five-point rating scale of agreement was used (1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Somewhat Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree Nor Disagree; 4 – Somewhat Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree). Following the same pattern of a five-point rating scale, this was also used to evaluate likeliness questions (1 – Extremely unlikely; 2 – Unlikely; 3 – Neither Unlikely Nor Likely; 4 – Likely; 5 – Extremely Likely).

Another important instrument used was benchmarking. Benchmarking was crucial to have a holistic view of onboarding nowadays. It allowed for a more concrete approach on the main trends of onboarding in terms of goals, practices and the process as a whole. Altogether, it contributed for the pilot onboarding program of Company A to be as effective and innovative as possible, in order for both newcomers and Company A benefit from.

In this sense, this work contemplates three benchmarking cases that are analyzed in more detail in chapter three. Nevertheless, we can anticipate that the first one concerns an action research conducted by Shufutinsky and Cox, in which they aimed to understand what was going on in health care organizations employing millennial talent and answer questions that regard talent recruitment and management in health science workplaces. The second benchmarking regards cloud and infrastructure services for developers and engineers' company – DigitalOcean. This company needed to create a strategic onboarding program in order to increase their hiring success and, consequently, improve their employee experience and performance. Finally, the third benchmarking respects an information and technologies company – Zapier – that develops an online automation tool that connects people's favorite

apps, such as Gmail, Slack, Mailchimp, among others. Zapier realized that onboarding was critical for both newcomer and them, so it was vital to do it right and to invest quite some time on it, which is detailed ahead.

Finally, in terms of the interview, this one was conducted by me. The interviewee, as previously said, was the Manager responsible for the project and to whom I had to report to. As said and presented in annex B, it was a semi-structured interview, in which I had to preserve the anonymity of the Manager and, therefore, I could not also have his consent to record or transcript the interview, so a summary of it had to be made. Nevertheless, the interview was conducted and was basically to infer his vision regarding how things were being done when onboarding new employees and what practices were in fact effective. Additionally, he was asked why there was a need for a change and what was the main goal of the program for him and Company A. In the light of this, two questions were made to him: (1) "regarding how Company A is doing right now in terms of onboarding new employees, why do you think there is a need for a change?" (2) "how do you see the future of onboarding at Company A?".

2.4. Procedure

Firstly, Team O engaged Company A, before my arrival into the company, in the onboarding making process through an online survey that aimed to collected information from employees that have been working in Company A for a while, in order to evaluate what features, processes or themes are most valued by them or that they felt as a missing element in their onboarding. This way, the program could also be designed according to the employees' opinions and ideas, so that they would feel involved in the changing process, which is an important aspect as literature showed us.

Secondly, the old onboarding program needed evaluation, because not all aspects of it were completely wrong. So, twenty newcomers were selected to answer an online survey that evaluated their satisfaction with the old onboarding program and engagement with Company A and their new role.

Last, but not least, after another twenty newcomers experienced the pilot onboarding program, an online survey was also sent to them, in order to evaluate their satisfaction with the pilot onboarding program and engagement with Company A and their new role.

All surveys were made available at the online platform Google Forms and sent through e-mail to the desired participants, with purpose, author and informing that all collected data would be analyzed in a confidential way. This means that all surveys were self-administered, since responses were collected later (Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

Concerning the interview, due to Portugal's situation in 2020 regarding COVID-19, this interview had to be made through Skype, in order to respect the social isolation asked by the Government at the time. The interview was conducted in Portuguese and had the duration of approximately twenty minutes, in which it was discussed the change of paradigm of Company A's onboarding program and how Company A would position itself in the future, in terms of onboarding and maybe other human resources practices. I could not have his consent to record or transcript the interview, so a summary of the responses given was made in chapter three.

Once the data was collected, both by the interview and the open questions of the surveys, these qualitative data were analyzed in terms of a content analysis approach. Content analysis is an investigation technique that intends to find indicators about the reality throughout an objective, systematic and quantitative description of the communications' contents (Bardin, 2011).

In terms of quantitative data, the responses of the participants were then exported to Excel in order to proceed with the statistical analysis to identify ranges, means and medians, in order to draw conclusions and have more concrete findings.

Chapter 3 – Findings and Results

In this chapter, it becomes important to present the findings that the instruments used – document analysis, benchmarking, survey and interview – collected and that are the base for this action research and mainly, for the pilot onboarding program, not only in terms of practices, but also in terms of timings and processes.

3.1. Benchmarking Onboarding

In order to study what organizations are using right now in onboarding programs as main practices, processes and goals, benchmarking allowed for this thesis to have a more holistic view of it.

An effective and successful onboarding program goes beyond welcome e-mails or a two hours class to deliver a great employee experience. In fact, an effective onboarding program should start with the pre-boarding phase, which means, before the first day of work. Besides, the workplace must be prepared for receiving a new employee. Below, are some successful cases of what onboarding is all about.

3.1.1. Shufutinsky and Cox

Firstly, in the 2019 Shufutinsky and Cox study, they proceeded with an action research that allowed them to understand what was going on in health care organizations, employing millennial talent and answer questions that regard talent recruitment and management in health science workplaces. These two researchers inquired participants to answer to three questions, although the focus here is on the last two questions: (1) "What is your age at the time you are completing this survey?", (2) "In your current or immediate-past workplace, what was your experience with and perception of the employee onboarding process, including pre-boarding? What worked and what did not work for you?" and (3) "If you were going to begin a new job next week, what would you like to see from your new employer in the employee onboarding process?".

Question number two was analyzed according to categories. The first category: retention comments. In terms of onboarding affecting retention of newcomers, the conclusion is that they try from the first day of onboarding to identify themselves with their new organizational culture, but most of them start to feel job dissatisfaction, and their intention or at least thoughts are about finding new opportunities. Researchers also found out that few of the comments directly indicate that employees are actively seeking other employment, and several of the comments

state that they realized this during onboarding, or at least during the first few weeks or months of employment in their current organizations. To sum up, these comments show that millennial participants are not pleased with the onboarding processes in their current or immediate past organizations.

In terms of pre-boarding comments, most of the health organizations lack an effective pre-boarding process, emphasizing the idea that human resources programs and organizations do not invest as much on onboarding as they do in recruitment and selection. Furthermore, most of these organizations do not have enough information online or in social media, which also harms the pre-boarding phase, since millennials grew up in the digital era and they struggle sometimes to find information about their new jobs and organizations anywhere else.

Moreover, the millennials past experiences revealed poor or nonexistent onboarding, which did not contribute for a good experience. Individuals actually felt sad, unpleased and with little orientation to start doing their jobs. This reveals again lack of investment in terms of onboarding and that maybe managers or Human Resources departments do not understand the concept of onboarding.

Additionally, in terms of onboarding effectiveness, most of the answers were negative, due to inadequate or incomplete onboarding, pointing out that orientation is different from onboarding and that talking about benefits is not the same as inducting a newcomer into their new role. Moreover, one of the problems raised, was that participants begin to work on day one, with little guidance and without even knowing their team, main tasks or responsibilities, making it difficult for a faster integration.

In what concerns the company culture, there are some organizations that may have hostile work environments, threatening or toxic leadership, and potential dishonesty. Millennial participants exposed that in some of their past experiences, this was seen on day one of onboarding, and they immediately felt unmotivated to show up in the next day. It is really important to make a positive first impression when it comes to effective onboarding.

Furthermore, millennials are more sensitive to technology and sustainability, since they grew up in that era. So, it is no surprise that they prefer onboarding documents or other materials in an electronic format rather than in hardcopy. This is also an opportunity for a more dynamic and interactive onboarding, for instance, through the company's app, which is something valued by the participants.

Of course, not all comments were negative. Although some participants may have never experienced proper onboarding, at least some of them already worked in places with great

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company culture positive leadership and teamwork. However, participants who experienced an effective onboarding, state that their will to stay at a given company increased.

Regarding question number three, researchers coded it according to the Gioia method. The collected information was then inserted into a table. This question aimed to ask participants for themes, ideas or process that would build an excellent onboarding program. The answers were aggregated into different categories: (a) the need for effective pre-boarding, (b) onboarding planning and execution, (c) information transparency and availability, (d) need for involvement of high-touch, teaching-style managers, (e) strong professional development programs, (f) innovative and functional workplaces and tools, and (g) inclusion of social justice aspects. This information can be seen in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 – Coded Construction of Questions 3 Data using Tabular form of Gioia Methodology

First Order: Concepts	Second Order: Trends	Third Order: Aggregate Dimensions
- New manager should call new employees - Co-workers should call new employees	Pre-start communication with the team	Need for an effective pre-boarding program
- Required documents, forms should be provided in advance - Have blogs, Facebook, other social media	Pre-start company information and required forms provided	
- Basic training can be provided before start - Description of first 30 days expectations and training should be provided in advance	Training and knowledge expectations provided pre-start	
- Short-term and long-term plan for integration - Schedule for entire onboarding	Onboarding schedule	Onboarding planning and execution
- Tour of facility - Meeting schedule for staff, leaders, clients	Onboarding tour and interview schedules	
- List of company acronyms - Company-specific jargon	Company-specific hacks should be provided	Information transparency and availability
- Information regarding status of the company - Info on corporate health, performance	VUCA information should be transparent	
- Job description available immediately - Should immediately get list of stakeholders - Organizational chart should be provided upon to arrival	Position-specific information should be shared upon arrival	
- My role, clearly defined - Detailed and accurate job description - ID of my place in the organization	Ensure job understanding and no role ambiguity	

- Regular constructive feedback - Direct communication - Management open to feedback - Managers that teach and train	Direct manager interaction and feedback during onboarding	Need high-touch, teaching-style management and leadership
- Regular coffee chats or tea times with bosses - Management open-door policy	Regular and routine meetings with the manager	
- Routine evaluations during first 6-12 months - Normal assessment and device for improvement early in the job	Regular manager evaluations of onboarding performance	
- Colleague mentorship program - Buddy system during onboarding - Assignment of a peer-advisor	Strong peer mentorship program	Strong professional development program
- Need a senior mentor and career mentor - Mentorship program at management level	Strong leader mentorship program	
- Clear professional development plan - Training and education plan and timeline - Planned and detailed on-the-job-training - Inter-department internships	Strong educational and learning programs	
- Career path options and roadmap - Promotion timelines - Descriptions of promotion requirements	Career positions, roles and promotion information	
- Innovative learning methods - E-learning, M-learning, S-learning - Phones, tablets pre-loaded with necessary contacts, apps remote access, forms, etc.	Use of technology for work and training	Innovative/functional workplace and tools
- Business cards, placards ergonomic furniture ready on first day - Internet, E-mail, phone access upon arrival	Workstation supplies ready for access and use	
- Explanation of company impact on society - Description of volunteer opportunities - Intro to local community programs	Corporate interaction and impact on the surrounding area(s)	Social justice aspects
- Reduction of manuals and paper forms - Explanation of sustainability	Environmental	

Font: Shufutinsky and Cox (2019, p. 45)

3.1.2. DigitalOcean: A People-First Hiring Experience

This company needed to create a strategic onboarding program in order to increase their hiring success and, consequently, the employee experience and performance for both newcomer and company.

To achieve this, DigitalOcean, with the help of a People Operations platform, built springs that automated the whole eighty-four tasks needed to proper onboard a new employee. This included things like buddy assignment, desk set-up, among others.

With this, DigitalOcean was able to onboard seventy employees in just six months, managing more than one thousand onboarding activities every month. This company bet it on: (1) desk and welcome kit personalization, in order for current employees to know where newcomers were and to go greet them; (2) a well-structured workflow, so that people knew exactly what it was expected from them in the first few weeks; (3) a handwritten welcome note; and (4) a bottle of champagne.

Altogether, newcomers reveal a great satisfaction and motivation with the whole process, affirming their huge will to work at DigitalOcean.

3.1.3. Zapier: Onboarding for Fully Distributed Team

Zapier realized that onboarding was critical for both newcomer and company, so it was important to do it right and to invest quite some time and money on it.

This company had four objectives to achieve with their new onboarding program: (1) gaining visibility into a new hire's progress; (2) improving ease of setup, onboarding process, and maintenance; (3) automating workflows within Sapling (global people operations platform); and (4) integrating the onboarding system with other human resources applications. In short, they wanted to integrate, in a faster way, their newcomers and to improve the whole employee experience, proving that onboarding was in fact a smart investment.

In this sense, Zapier's onboarding program focused on making newcomers to feel welcomed; introducing them to Zapier as a company, to the team, and to the role; setting the precedent for how Zapier operates; and giving them time to read and handle their human resources tasks. Additionally, Zapier made a Playbook to support the whole onboarding process and to clarify some quick doubts that newcomers might have.

Also, with the help of a digital platform, Zapier started to deliver detailed, customizable and personalized workflow management, up to ninety days, along with robust dashboards for increased people visibility. This decision not only saved more than four hundred and eighty hours on manual processes a year, but also allowed cross-departmental automated communication, and a much more effective hiring and onboarding processes.

From this strategic choice, they were able to hire and onboard two hundred employees in just one year with very positive results in terms of employee experience and performance.

3.2. Onboarding at Company A

Now it becomes important to characterize Company A and diagnose the way that it is onboarding new employees before the new pilot onboarding program and how newcomers perceive it.

3.2.1. Company A

As previously said, Company A operates in the insurance sector, and acts in life and nonlife areas, with a multi-brand strategy and with a wide range of channels. It is held by a larger Enterprise Group – Group A – that operates in the insurance, health, bank, audit, consultancy, home and car assistance areas.

Due to its position in the market, Company A also takes responsibility for diffusing good practices within its sector and developing products and services that are in the best interest of the market and clients, such as saving and retirement products, preventive medicine, among others. For now, Company A assumes a multichannel approach to the market, in order to sell, in an effective way, its products and services and to be closer to all its clients.

Nonetheless, Company A realized that not everything are numbers or profits. Their strategy is also about taking care of their people, not only clients, but also employees. This is why their Human Resources department is oriented to a more strategic approach to people, especially when it comes to talent management, more specifically, onboarding.

Company A understood that it was not doing an effective onboarding. They were just welcoming newcomers and soon after that, they were put in front of a desk to start doing their tasks and with little guidance or orientation. So, challenged by the human resources director, Team O evaluated this situation and started to work on a new pilot onboarding program. One that would provide a great employee experience, prove that this was a good investment to retain talent, to provide well-structured processes and tasks, and ultimately, contribute to the increase of employer branding.

3.2.2. Diagnosis

As abovementioned, Company A was onboarding new employees in an ineffective and incomplete way. At the start of this project, it became necessary to diagnose how things were being made, in terms of themes, processes and tasks, not only by the Human Resources department, but also by the several teams that would receive, eventually, a new employee. In this sense, several meetings were schedule with the different managers, in order to do a more accurate diagnosis.

Before the pilot onboarding program, Company A informed the selected candidate by telephone, sending then an e-mail with all the detailed information for the first day, including the starting date and the meeting point. The meeting point was always Company A's headquarters, unless if the workplace was outside the capital. In that case the meeting point would be the workplace – a rarer situation.

Commonly, the newcomer was received by a member of the Payroll team, for a more procedural reception. That means revision and signature of the contract and respective benefits, as well as training in the main tools used by the Human Resources department in terms of performance appraisal, norms, entrance or exit registration, vacation schedule and the employee's portal, in which employees can learn about the insurance labor law and benefits, ask for support in terms of hardware, software or other doubts and paychecks receipts, among other tools. If the place of work was not Lisbon, these would be made by the newcomers' Manager. This translates in the typical two hours class session of onboarding to also explain with more detail, the newcomer's role and area.

Afterwards, the member of the Payroll's team or the newcomer's Manager, would then make a small tour throughout the building, ending it by introducing the newcomer to his new team, near lunch time. After a team lunch, the Manager and the newcomer would meet in a room to talk about Company A's culture, mission, vision and values, its core business and main processes, like the intranet and its features. At the end of this meeting, the Manager asked for any doubts and presented the main tasks and goals of the team and the newcomer's new role and what impact he or she could have. At the end of the day, the newcomer would receive a personal computer, a pen, a notebook and a backpack.

To sum up, this was onboarding for Company A. A whole lot of information in just one day, that probably only a small percentage of it was absorbed by the newcomer. In the second day, the new employee would already be introduced to his workstation and projects, with only some orientation or guidance from his team and colleagues. This is not effective onboarding. This is not how to create a great employee experience and to be distinguished in the field. And Company A realized that and started a pilot onboarding program from scratch, precisely because it understood that newcomers could engage and perform better if proper onboarded, which would contribute for talent retention.

In the light of these, Company A comprehended that onboarding should be seen as an investment rather than a cost, and that would bring benefits for both newcomers and organization. For the past years, Company A feels the need for employees to have a holistic view of the company and the businesses that complement the main product, which is insurance.

So, why not start with newcomers? Therefore, a pilot onboarding program was built, in order to fulfil these goals and the abovementioned.

3.2.3. Survey

The first survey sent by Team O to the different employees, aimed to find out what themes they considered vital to be on the future onboarding of Company A. Although the analysis was already done by Team O, the themes focused mainly on: (1) knowing the company as a whole, (2) need for dynamism, (3) agility in guaranteeing the accesses and permissions, (4) more feedback from managers on employees' performance, and (5) business training.

Afterwards, it became important to evaluate the perceptions and satisfaction of new hires with the old onboarding process. The analysis of this survey regards the sample of the first twenty newcomers who experienced the old onboarding program of Company A and after spending approximately six months into their roles.

3.2.3.1. Demographic Information

This section had the main aim to collect demographic information of the sample in order to characterize it. The responses and analysis can be seen below.
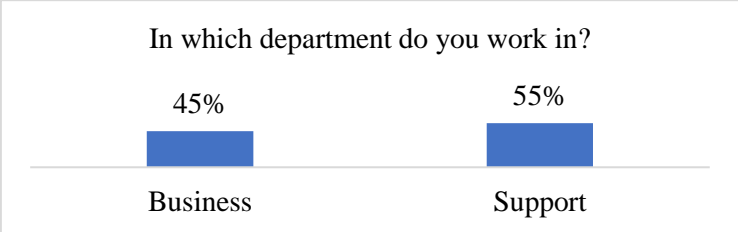
Figure 3.1 – Work department

The variable "Department" was recoded into categories, in order to better analyze the data, which originated the categorical variable "Work Area". In this case, respondents were grouped into two new categories: "Business" and "Support".

From figure 3.1, 45% of respondents work in a business area, and 55% of them work in a support area, as we can also see in annex C.

Table 3.2 – Respondents' gender

Gender	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Male	10	50%
Female	10	50%

From the total of 20 respondents of the survey, 50% (N = 10) were female and 50% (N = 10) were male.
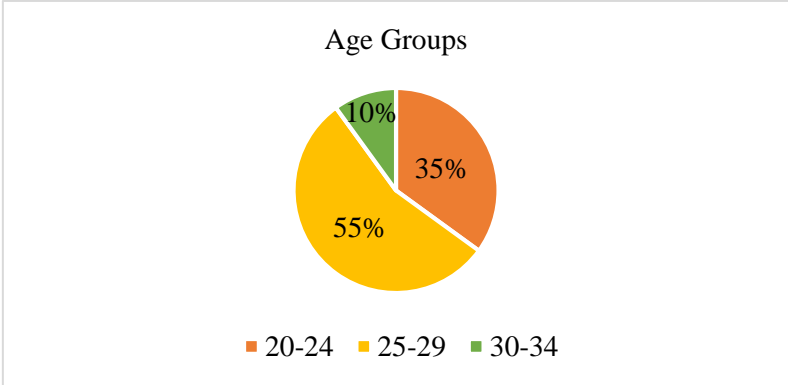
Figure 3.2 – Respondents' age groups

Overall, the youngest respondent was 23 years old, while the oldest was 32. The mean value of the variable "Age" was 25.9, as we can see in annex D.

Moreover, the scale variable "Age" was recoded into categories, in order to better analyze the data, which originated the categorical variable "Age Groups". In this case, respondents were grouped into three new categories: "20-24", 25-29" and "30-34".

In this case, 35% of respondents were between 20 and 24 years old, 55% were between 25 and 29 years old and finally, 10% were between 30 and 34 years old.
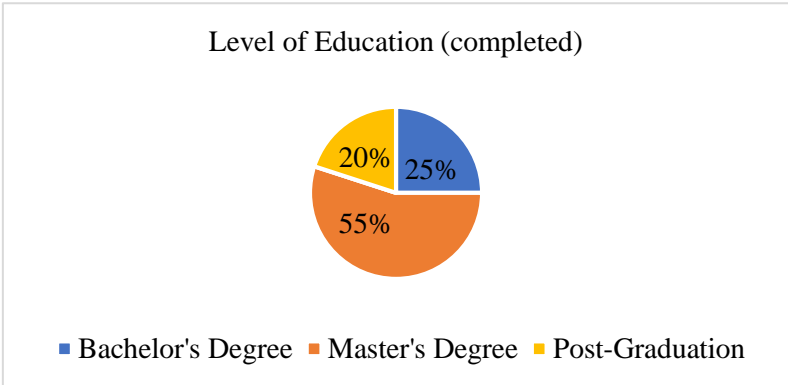
Figure 3.3 – Respondents' level of education

To conclude the sample characterization, respondents were asked to indicate their level of completed education. So, according to figure 3.3 and annex E, 25% of respondents have a Bachelor's Degree, 55% a Master's Degree and 20% a Post-Graduation.

3.2.3.2. Onboarding Experience

In the first question of this section, respondents were asked what their level of agreement was towards several statements regarding their onboarding experience. The responses and analysis

can be seen below and, in more detail, in annex F. In terms of descriptive analysis, due to the small sample of twenty newcomers, the analysis had into account the absolute and relative frequencies, as well as the respective means and medians.

Table 3.3 – Descriptive Analysis: Onboarding Experience

Level of Agreement – Onboarding Experience			
Parameter	N	Mean	Median
The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go.	20	3.45	4
I feel like I fit in the company culture.	20	4	4
I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand my job/tasks.	20	3.65	4
I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand the company as a whole.	20	3.2	3
In the onboarding process, I got to know where to go to get additional assistance on personnel matters, benefits, paperwork, etc.	20	3.75	4
I received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services.	20	2.9	3
All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected.	20	2.55	2.5
The onboarding process helped me feel welcomed.	20	3.3	3
I found the onboarding program interesting and interactive/dynamic.	20	3.05	3
Overall, I am satisfied with the onboarding process.	20	3.15	3

Globally, respondents tend to agree that they were somewhat satisfied with their onboarding experience (mean = 3.15). In fact, at least 50% of respondents selected at maximum the option "Neither Agree Nor Disagree" (median = 3).

However, it is important to analyze and see which parameters have a higher score and which ones deserve an improvement for the pilot onboarding program. In this sense, we can see that the only parameter with a mean of 4 is "I feel like I fit in the company culture". Therefore, onboarding plays an effective role in terms of transmitting the company's culture for newcomers, integrating them into it, which contributes for a better employee experience.

Table 3.3 shows that the pilot onboarding program needs to improve in several parameters, such as "I received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services" (mean = 2.9) and "All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected" (mean = 2.55). So, when thinking in the pilot onboarding program, it is important to carefully design this welcome kit, in order to be innovative, but also close to the newcomer. In fact, it is a great element to welcome new employees (Bauer, Erdogan & Caughlin, 2019).

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Furthermore, onboarding should be a helpful process that newcomers experience to better understand the company as a whole (mean = 3.2), so that they feel welcomed as soon as possible (mean = 3.3), which are also parameters to improve in the pilot onboarding program.

Moreover, it is important to make the pilot onboarding program more dynamic and interactive for newcomers, in order for them to have a great employee experience and a faster integration. As we can see from table 3.3, respondents only tend to agree with this parameter (mean = 3.05).

It is important that the pilot onboarding program improves the abovementioned parameters, in order to achieve the desirable objectives of it.
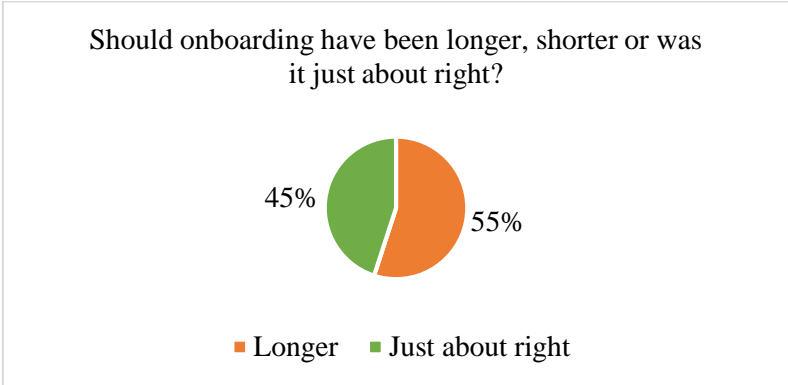
Figure 3.4 – Onboarding duration

Regarding the onboarding duration question, the twenty respondents were asked to evaluate if their onboarding experience should have been longer, shorter or if it was adequate. As we can see from figure 3.4, 55% of newcomers considered that it should have been longer, while 45% think it was appropriate, as we can see also in annex G.

In this sense, it is important to carefully design and structure an onboarding program, in order to have the most adequate duration as possible, but at the same time, that fulfils its objectives.
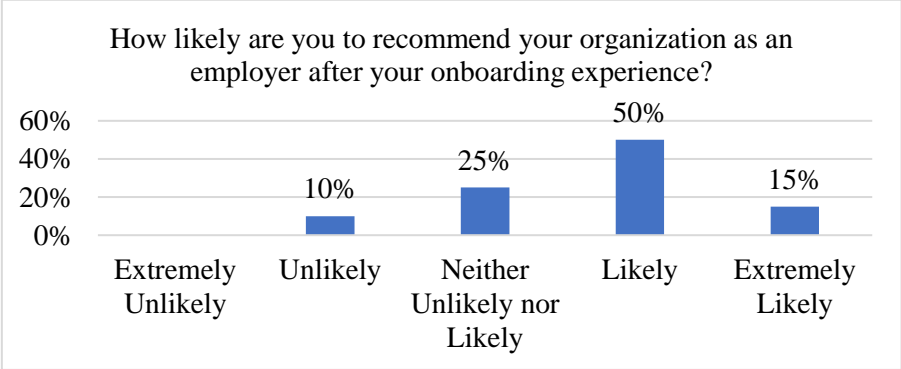
Figure 3.5 – Likelihood to recommend Company A

The third question aimed to assess the likelihood of the sample to recommend Company A as an employer after their onboarding experience. From figure 3.5, we can conclude that half of the respondents are "Likely" to recommend Company A as an employer and 15% are "Extremely Likely" to do it after their onboarding experience, as we can see also, and in more detail, in annex H.

Onboarding is the first impact that newcomers face. So, if Company A wants to be a reference in the market, it is important for it to design an innovative and effective onboarding program, so that newcomers do not hesitate when recommend it as a great employer. From figure 3.5, there are some hesitation in doing it so.

Table 3.4 – Descriptive Analysis: Describe your onboarding process in one sentence

Describe your onboarding process in one sentence.		
Second Order: Categories	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Need for Onboarding planning and execution	7	35%
Need for leadership involvement and feedback	2	10%
Need for Business Training	5	25%
Effective Welcoming	6	30%

The next question was an open one, so the responses obtained were very different. It asked respondents to describe their onboarding process in one sentence. Therefore, to proceed with the descriptive analysis, responses had to be recoded into categories, as we can see in table 3.4. In this table we can only see the second order, but the first one is visible in annex I. The first order analysis relates directly with the individuals' answers, which were used to identify the concepts collected from participants. Then, the second order, organizes the different responses into aggregate dimensions – categories.

With this being said, we can observe from table 3.4, that 35% of respondents, from their experience, feel a "Need for onboarding planning and execution". Moreover, 25% of individuals feel the "Need for business training", which means that these respondents considered their business training to be ineffective or non-existing. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that 30% of respondents felt welcomed during their onboarding experience, which can be thankful to their teams and not to the process itself.

To conclude this question, the pilot onboarding program will probably improve most of the aspects pointed out by newcomers, namely regarding planning and training.

Table 3.5 – Descriptive Analysis: What would have made your first days better?

What would have made your first days better?		
Second Order: Categories	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Need for team support	3	15%
Need for effective Company training	5	25%
Need for more Human Resources intervention	2	10%
Need for an onboarding planning and execution	4	20%
Effective onboarding	6	30%

The last question of the first section of the survey, aimed to assess what would have made the first days of the newcomers better. The same process of coding was used in this question as in the previous one. In this table we can only see the second order, but the first one is visible in annex J.

It is important to highlight that 30% of respondents considered their onboarding to have been effective. Nevertheless, 20% think that there is a "Need for an onboarding planning and execution" in the future, since it was not structured at that moment. Again, 25% of respondents feel the "Need for effective Company training", which depends also on the areas of allocation. In fact, there is a need not only for learning more about the job, but also about Company A's history, mission, values, business, among other issues.

3.2.3.3. Job Experience

In this section, the first question asked respondents what their level of agreement was, towards several statements regarding their job experience in their first few weeks on the role. The responses and analysis can be seen below and in more detail in annex K.

Table 3.6 – Descriptive Analysis: Job Experience

Level of Agreement – Job Experience			
Parameter	**N**	**Mean**	**Median**
I was given all the necessary resources to perform my job successfully (including hardware, software, stationery, guidelines, ...).	20	3.95	4
My goals/tasks were clearly defined.	20	3.75	4
I have a clear understanding of my career path and perspectives/possibilities.	20	3.65	4
I received additional training to perform my job successfully (internal systems, general operating practices, …).	20	3.4	4
My supervisor provided me with regular feedback on my performance.	20	3.7	4
The job description and recruitment process were consistent with what I am currently experiencing.	20	3.9	4
I am proud to work for this company.	20	4.3	4.5
My manager was prepared for my arrival.	20	4.15	4.5
My manager checked in with me regularly to answer any questions or concerns.	20	4.3	5
I received helpful orientation to perform my job.	20	3.85	4.5
I feel integrated into my team.	20	4.25	5
Overall, I am satisfied with my job experience so far.	20	4	4

Overall, respondents agree that they are overall satisfied with their job experience (mean = 4). In fact, at least 50% of respondents selected at maximum the option "Somewhat Agree" (median = 4).

Moreover, in the first few weeks on the job, newcomers feel integrated into their teams (mean = 4.25) and claim that their Manager was prepared for their arrival (mean = 4.15) and that their Manager checked in with them regularly (mean = 4.3). Specifically, these parameters obtained good results and should be maintained or improved in the pilot onboarding program. Actually, it is important to understand, with the different areas of Company A, what they are doing, in individual terms, to onboard new hires.

However, there are parameters that need improvement in the pilot onboarding program. As we can see from table 3.6, most newcomers tend to agree that they needed more training to perform their job (mean = 3.4). When onboarding newcomers, their performance and employee experience might improve, if there would be an effective training and orientation.

Nowadays, we know that feedback is an important tool for employers and employees to understand where they stand in terms of their performance, integration and engagement. In the first few weeks on the job, respondents tend to agree that their Manager provided them with feedback (mean = 3.7). When arriving to a new role, new hires want to achieve great performances and to impress their teams and managers. So, feedback is important for them and

it should be provided by their managers. As we can see from table 3.6, the results are good, but can be improved. Besides, all areas of Company A should be aware of the importance of this parameter and this can be achieved through training sessions for instance.

Globally, it is expected that most parameters improve in the pilot onboarding program and it should be designed considering this idea. According to table 3.6 and comparing the results with the overall satisfaction with the onboarding process and the weeks following it, onboarding might have a greater impact in the beginning of the phase, rather than in the following weeks, if the hiring areas are motivated and have a clear plan for the newcomer. However, a planned onboarding in the first few days of effective work is crucial for both employee and hiring area – improving the employee experience and ability to perform the job in the process.

Table 3.7 – Descriptive Analysis: What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?

What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?		
Second Order: Categories	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Effective orientation	7	35%
Need for training and orientation	4	20%
More job responsibilities and clear tasks	3	15%
More workplace preparation	2	10%
Need for socialization and feedback	4	20%

This question was also an open one, so the responses obtained were very different. It asked respondents to refer what could have gone better in the weeks leading up to their new job. Therefore, to proceed with the descriptive analysis, responses had to be recoded into categories, as we can see in table 3.7. In this table we can only see the second order, since the first one is visible in the annex L. The first order analysis relates directly with the individuals' answers, which were used to identify the concepts collected from participants. Then, the second order, organizes the different responses into categories.

In this sense, according to table 3.7, 35% of respondents considered to have had an effective orientation in the weeks leading up to their new role. However, 20% of respondents claim a "Need for training and orientation" once again, that did not exist or was ineffective. Finally, 20% felt the "Need for socialization and feedback", which was non-existing or ineffective as well, which is a powerful tool as we previously saw.

3.2.3.4. Company A's attractiveness as an Employer

In this section, the aim was to evaluate the attractiveness of Company A as an employer, after the onboarding and role experience. The responses and analysis can be seen below.

Figure 3.6 – Time at Company A

The first question just wanted to address for how long the respondents were working at Company A. In this sense, two newcomers were at Company A for five months, ten for six months and eight for seven months. So, this is within the target of this survey.
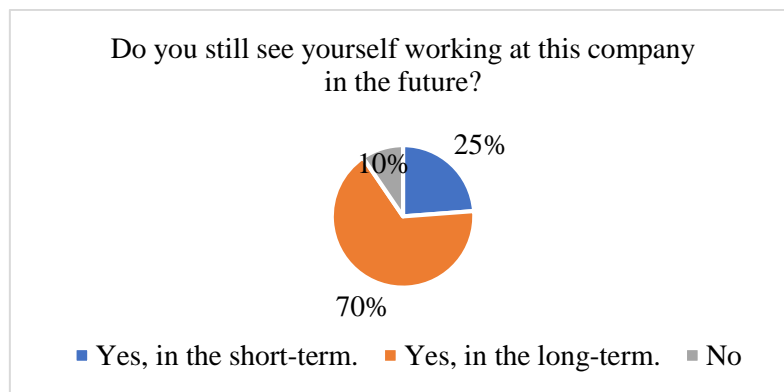
Figure 3.7 – Retention for Company A

The second question aimed to evaluate if newcomers saw themselves working at Company A in the future and after this first six months (approximately). So, according to figure 3.7 and annex M, an astonishing 70% of respondents said "Yes, in the long-term" and 25% of them answered "Yes, in the short-term". Hopefully, with the pilot onboarding program, the results will be even better, and we might not have any "No" responses.
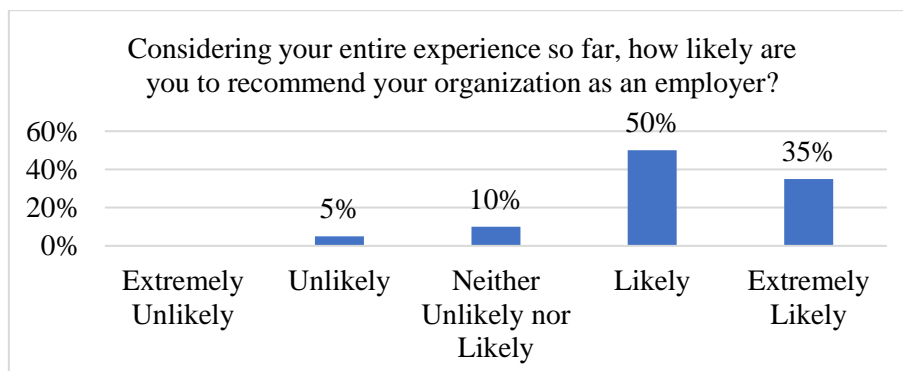
Figure 3.8 – Likelihood to recommend Company A

The third question of this section aimed to assess the likelihood of newcomers to recommend Company A as an employer after their first months on the job. As we can see from figure 3.8, 50% of the respondents are "Likely" to recommend Company A as an employer and 35% are "Extremely Likely", as we can see also in annex N.

3.2.4. Interview

As previously said, the interview was made to the responsible for the project and to whom I should report to in terms of the pilot onboarding program, in order to have his critical vision regarding onboarding at Company A, not only in the present days, but also his vision for the future. Since it was not possible to have the Manager's consent to record the interview, a summary of it had to be made.

The Manager started by explaining the current onboarding process, that starts, as abovementioned, by a typical presentation, in which, generally, a member of the Payroll team receives the new hire for the signing of the contract and introduction to the main Human Resources tools and processes (performance appraisal, main tools, benefits, norms, training, etc.). Additionally, the Recruiter responsible for the hire, introduces the newcomer's role and area, in order to give additional information and context on the first day of work of each newcomer, besides giving more context about the area, goals and main tasks. This constitutes the role of the Human Resources team on the first day of work of any new hire.

From the Manager's point of view, this onboarding process is not well-structured and has a lack of alignment between the different teams of the Human Resources department, because the information transmitted to any new hire is a little superficial and, since it is a lot on the first day, new hires do not absorb it completely. Another problem identified by him, is that when an employee enters for the first time in Company A, there is a lack of information in terms giving a holistic view of the business, which impacts the newcomer's decisions and tasks, so it is important to provide that vision in a future onboarding.

With this being said, for the onboarding and effective integration of new employees, it is crucial that the different teams are aligned in order to provide the best possible employee experience for the new hire and for Company A to collect the benefits of it. Therefore, not only the Payroll team and the Recruiter should be a part of the onboarding process, but also (1) the Internal Communication team, to clarify which are the employees' contents and how to access them, to elucidate about Company A's tone and how to address to other colleagues, no matter the career level, (2) the Training and Development team, to present the training and development platform, how to access contents, specially the onboarding ones at the beginning

of the experience, to explain what is a training and development plan and what are the learning possibilities, (3) the Talent Management team, in order to clarify the performance appraisal steps, what kind of objectives should employees define and the respective appraisal dates and what are the possibilities in terms of internal mobility and career path, among others.

Besides the reception from the Human Resources department, the Manager also states that there is a need for an alignment between them and the area that is going to integrate the new employee. So, the future process should benefit from a better alignment between the Human Resources department and the hiring areas, in order to ensure a continuity in the process from the newcomer's point of view. The Manager responsible for the area of the newcomer, introduces, in brief terms, the area, its objectives and the newcomer's role. However, sometimes the Team Leader of that area repeats the contents already spoken by the Manager or in the opposite pole, assumes that the information was already presented and in some cases it was not. So, this alignment between all teams that are going to receive a new employee is essential in order to have an effective onboarding program.

In addition to this, the Manager considers that the key factor for onboarding at Company A, is not only the alignment between teams, but also what it can provide, which is a sense of continuity from the newcomer's perspective. For this to happen, the Manager believes that it is important to identify a person to deliver and show this sense of continuity of the onboarding program, which can be achieved, for instance, by the figure of a buddy. Someone that would be present since day one, and to whom the newcomer could come to, in order to clarify any issue, concern and facilitate his or her integration into the team and company. Ideally, this buddy should be someone from the newcomer's area.

3.3. Main Conclusions

To sum up, new hires get anxious on day one, trying to fit in not only on their new role, but also into the company culture and their team. As aforementioned, newcomers need and want to identify as quickly as they can with their new experience, in terms of people, tasks, culture and processes. However, companies are only now turning their strategies and investments to this human resources' practice – onboarding.

According to the benchmarking made, there exists still employees that feel that onboarding is not being effective when it comes to provide a great employee experience and to integrate newcomers into new roles and their teams, which leads to unmotivated employees and high turnover for companies, not to mention that the investment made in the recruitment and selection process goes to waste. Also, the pre-boarding phase is crucial. New hires need to be

informed and to have a complete access to the information regarding their first day, things like where to go, schedules, who is going to receive them, among others. Therefore, preparation is key to receive any new hire and technology, nowadays, can help Human Resources teams, since some processes can be automated, which clears agendas for other important tasks.

Additionally, new hires who experience effective onboarding, feel a better welcoming since day one, they understand their job tasks and goals, they feel integrated into their teams and identify themselves with the company culture, increasing their performance, which benefits both employee and company, not to mention that effective and planned onboarding increases the whole employee experience. Furthermore, onboarding allows for more motivated employees, which leads to talent retention for a given organization. Besides, providing a clear career path or perspective also helps in the process of job satisfaction and retention.

Moreover, newcomers reveal that feedback is an important practice, especially in the onboarding phase. New hires search for a fast fitting and goals accomplishment since day one, so managers and team members or leaders should provide positive and constructive feedback, so that newcomers know what path to take, in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

Regarding the survey, we can conclude that currently, onboarding is being effective in terms of making newcomers identify themselves with Company A's culture. This might be one of the reasons why 50% of the respondents are likely to recommend Company A as an employer, after the onboarding experience. But there is still some work to do in the pilot onboarding program. As we saw in the literature review, employees need to feel that they belong, in order to achieve greater performances.

In what concerns the aspects to improve for the pilot onboarding program, it is important to carefully plan and execute the program from A to Z, especially when it comes to present Company A as a whole to the new employees, so that they got to know each company and business of the larger group and understand how their tasks can influence other teams. This might mean a longer onboarding, as 55% of respondents said.

In terms of the job experience, in the first few weeks on the job, newcomers already feel integrated into their teams and affirm that everything was prepared for their arrival. Nevertheless, respondents considered to exist a lack of feedback on their performances and integration during the first weeks of effective work, as well as a lack of training, not only in terms of Company A's core business, but also in terms of internal processes that, naturally, affect performance.

Another interesting element is that after six months on the job, people become more likely or extremely likely to recommend Company A as an employer. In fact, 70% of respondents see themselves working at Company A in the long-term.

From the survey, we can conclude that onboarding as a greater impact in the beginning of the phase, in making that first positive impression, rather than in the following weeks. However, the hiring areas must be properly prepared for the arrival of a new employee.

In what concerns the interview, we conclude that in order to design the pilot onboarding program, all teams – from the Human Resources team to the hiring one – must be aligned in order to transmit the same message to each newcomer and to positively contribute to his experience and integration. So, several meetings must be conducted with the different stakeholders involved in a hiring, in order to ensure the alignment between all.

In this sense and according to the results obtained, the pilot onboarding program must respond to the needs and objectives of Company A. These results allowed an identification of key aspects and practices to improve in the pilot onboarding program. Therefore, it will be important to present to the newcomers, in a dynamic way, Company A as a whole, from the products and services, to the different businesses. Additionally, in order to increase the sense of belonging, Team O will work on a brand-new welcome kit, carefully designed with personalized items of Company A. Furthermore, it will be important to add to the pilot onboarding program, specific feedback moments, in order for newcomers to talk about their worries or positive aspects, and also for them to know how they are performing and integrating into the company and respective role. All combined, the aim is to design a great onboarding program, that improves the employee experience and talent retention aspects for Company A.

Chapter 4 – The Project

4.1. Pilot Onboarding Program

As aforementioned, this pilot onboarding program will change the paradigm in Company A, by seeing onboarding as an investment, that makes the difference in each new hire. Besides improving the employee experience and job satisfaction, Company A expects to increase its talent retention and performance. And it all starts in the onboarding phase.

In the light of this, the pilot onboarding program was designed to provide to newcomers a full spectrum of Company A, but in a very innovative way, in which newcomers participated in several hands-on activities, in order to know the full business and Company A's mission, values and culture. In addition to this, the program was designed considering the need for feedback, that each new hire seeks about his or her performance and induction.

For this to happen in the most efficient and effective way possible, the challenge was to align all the people involved in a new hire, through several meetings alongside the project, moderated by Team O.

Furthermore, Team O wanted to create as soon as possible a sense of belonging in each newcomer. In this sense, the team designed and produced a very specific welcome kit, with personalized items for each new employee. This material element helps in creating that sense of belonging and engagement with Company A.

So, it was based on the results obtained in chapter 3 and in the abovementioned, that the pilot onboarding program was designed, executed and evaluated, as we can see below.

4.1.1. Project objectives

Due to the lack of research and interest of many companies in what concerns onboarding, its practices and benefits to both employee and organization, especially in Portugal, this thesis aims to contribute to a deeper understanding regarding this area and for a change of paradigm at Company A.

Therefore, it became important to analyze and compare cases of success and unsuccess, in what regards onboarding. Based on findings and needs, the goal was to build a pilot of an onboarding program for an insurance company – Company A. Once implemented, it became vital to evaluate the newcomers experience throughout the program.

From the employee's point of view, this work will study the induction of newcomers. In this sense, the main objective of the evaluation is to assess the benefits of integration and will

to stay at Company A, after experiencing a well performed onboarding program, and how this affects the whole employee experience.

On the other hand, from the organization's point of view, the main objective, as said, is to change the paradigm – to see onboarding practices as an investment rather than a cost. Moreover, how a robust onboarding program can potentiate the benefits for both employee and organization, which may consolidate their competitive advantage.

4.1.2. Preparation

As previously said, the main goal of this action research was to design and implement a pilot onboarding program, that contributes for a great employee experience, engagement and talent retention at an insurance company.

This project also aims for an increase in terms of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance for both employee and organization. So, as said, inserted in the Human Resources department of Company A, the pilot onboarding program was designed.

In short terms, it was designed for two weeks, with some feedback sessions along the way. This program allowed the group of twenty newcomers to have a more holistic view of the company, as well as of the culture. And why having a holistic view of Company A and feedback sessions was so important for this project? Because the first survey that the Human Resources department sent to the current employees that assessed what themes, ideas or processes were crucial for an onboarding program, there were in fact two main aspects that gained a major relevance in the responses: holistic view of Company A and more feedback in the integration phase. In this sense, the pilot onboarding program was planned and executed based on these two principles. In fact, this was a great way to involve Company A in the onboarding making process.

Furthermore, the new hires could only have a holistic view of Group A with the commitment of not only the Human Resources department, but also of key stakeholders, specialists in fact in their different areas and companies of the larger Group A. These areas involved different branches of Group A, namely in the health, internationalization, support, commercial, product, home, car, assistance, life, savings and travelling branches. In that sense, these stakeholders were contacted by Team O, responsible for this project, in order to invite them all for several meetings, in which the program and purpose could be explained in more detail. The response of the stakeholders was one hundred percent positive, since they also had been feeling the need to better onboard new hires. Therefore, Team O, in the meeting, involved

the different stakeholders in the process of identifying which themes and ideas could be relevant for the new pilot onboarding program.

Moreover, based on the surveys, the Manager's interview and with some identified themes and possible providers or speakers, Team O started to work on what would be in fact the whole pilot onboarding program and came up to the conclusion that it would have to be made in terms of practicality, so that newcomers would be in touch with several realities of Company A. This practicality meant that newcomers would be in contact with the different areas, stakeholders, businesses and companies of Group A. In this sense, Team O managed another meeting with these key stakeholders, in order to explain them the goal of the newcomers' visits, which was to give to them a more holistic view of the larger Group and to effective integrate all off them into Company A. The stakeholders were also asked to prepare the reception of these new hires, based on the principle of practicality and dynamism.

Concerning the size of this Enterprise Group, Team O decided to try out this program on a group of twenty newcomers, divided into four teams of five members each – Team One, Team Two, Team Three and Team Four. With the selected hires, all twenty newcomers were allocated, in a randomly way, to the different teams and each team also had a responsible person from Team O, in order for newcomers to have a more direct contact, for any doubt, share or concern. This also potentiated a better employee experience and faster integration into the company's culture.

The main idea behind having four teams, was to visit the different companies and businesses of Group A, but in an organized way, in order for the daily tasks to not be interrupted by twenty people. Besides, this allowed for more visits in just two weeks, because not all teams went to the same places. However, they were all together in some key moments, which will be explained ahead.

From the preparation phase to the first day of this onboarding program, Team O managed a two-week schedule for the four teams, including visits, talks, hands-on activities and all the logistics behind it, like room reservations, speakers and materials availability. The key factor was to provide a great welcoming and induction into Company A.

With the onboarding program designed, it became important to inform all key stakeholders of the final product, what was expected from them and, after the two weeks of onboarding, how should each hiring area receive the new employee. So, each Hiring Manager was informed to have the newcomer's desk prepared, an introduction meeting with all the team in order to present the area or main tasks and a team lunch. Afterwards, each team could continue the onboarding according to what they thought it was appropriate, without forgetting that feedback

on the performance of the newcomer was vital, as well as effectively integrate the new hire into the team and department.

4.1.3. Pilot Onboarding Program

With all the arrangements and preparations made, it was time to induct the twenty newcomers into Company A and start the pilot onboarding program. The twenty newcomers were informed by e-mail with the necessary information regarding the first day, including where to go (Company A's headquarters), at what time (9 a.m.), dress code (business casual), who was receiving them (Team O) and what would be the first activity of these two weeks (business breakfast).

In this sense, at 9 a.m., Team O was receiving the new hires, welcoming them, delivering them neck ribbons with their names on and already with the numbers of their assigned teams. Then, Team O led them to the business breakfast. This breakfast was held by the Human Resources Director, the Training and Development Manager and owner of this project, the Executive responsible for the international areas, an Internal Communication Specialist and a Marketing Team Leader. At this breakfast, each participant got the opportunity to introduce and present himself. Newcomers talked about their academic experience, from where they were natural, where they saw the opportunity, reasons for applying, expectations regarding the new experience, among other curiosities. On the other hand, Company A's employees talked about themselves, their past experiences, how they ended up at Company A and their vision regarding the company, as well as future challenges in their respective areas.

Following the breakfast, the first panel of speakers was ready in the auditorium to give the first talk regarding Company A's mission and values. This panel had four speakers from four different areas of Company A – Health, Commercial, Marketing and Business Development – and one moderator from the Human Resources department. The panel was challenged to present the theme, from their point of view and, at the end, to answer some questions from newcomers. At the end, each newcomer received a set of gaming cards, regarding Company A's values and in teams, they had to link each card to each Company A's value.

Moreover, during the afternoon and with the support of a training and development company, newcomers engaged in several teambuilding activities, in which they had the opportunity to develop, in a micro scenario, leadership, creativity, logical, critical thinking and communication skills. These activities involved the construction of puzzles, plots, selection of competencies for any professional working at Company A and public speaking. The day ended in a funny and enjoyable way: each participant needed to inflate a balloon, glue it to a wooden

board, and then cross the bridge – a clear metaphor for entering, with no fears, into the huge universe that is Company A – to grab the welcome kit, which included (1) two notebooks with the name of the new employee on it, (2) a pen, (3) one backpack, (4) one company's computer, (5) one keychain, (6) one neck ribbon, (7) one agenda for the next two weeks, so that they knew exactly where to go and at what time and (8) one flash drive with onboarding materials and support documents for newcomers to explore, including presentations and orientations regarding Company A's values, mission, products and services, communication tone and templates, configuration tutorials and links for newcomers to enter the training platform and start their personal onboarding, but in a gamified way, where healthy competition is the base.

Continuing on the second day, all newcomers were again received by Team O, who led them to the auditorium, for the talks of the day, one hour each, with key speakers, regarding different themes:

- Company A's Universe: talk and discussion of the larger Enterprise Group, in which Company A is inserted, the market offer, as well as future challenges, goals and vision.

- Worldwide Presence: presentation and discussion of where Company A operates and what products and services are available in the different markets. This talk also allowed for participants to understand what is the work developed by the different departments, either support, commercial or development.

- Company A, a holistic view: this talk aimed for participants to have a holistic and clear view of Group A, since all companies complement the main business and the market, either in terms of products or services and in the areas of health, internationalization, big companies, support, commercial, home, car, assistance, savings and travelling.

- A Changing World: this talk focused on the main challenges that Company A will face in the future, due to the changes that are occurring in the insurance sector, as well as in the demand for insurance products. Insurance companies, more than ever, are being requested for complementing their products with their services. Company A has the goal to build a strong competitive advantage and this means some adaptations and innovations in terms of approach to the market.

- We Go Beyond: this presentation aimed to clarify all the participants that Company A does more than just selling their products and services. In case of a major accident, Company A is right next to its clients, until the end if needed, doing everything it can, in order to improve clients' life quality.

- Know your buddy: to end the day, all newcomers were invited to engage in a more practical activity, with the purpose of finding their previous assigned buddy. The game was simple, each newcomer had a card, with some information regarding the buddy's tastes, likes, dislikes and some other curiosities. Newcomers had to ask questions to the different buddies in the auditorium, without making the exact questions. This buddy had as main job to be side by side with the newcomer, clarifying any doubts or concerns, integrating him or her into their new roles and contribute for the best possible employee experience, in which buddy and newcomer also learn with each other. The first task for the different pairs, was to define their main communication channel and to exchange contact information.

At the end of the day, Team O gave some final indications for the following onboarding days, saying that at the end of the two weeks, each team would have to present their perspective of the onboarding experienced, since not all would visit the same places. Creativity was a requirement and they were advised to take pictures, make videos and so on. It was important to keep newcomer's attention sharp and their minds interested and engaged with all the activities, which was achieved through this simple milestone.

For the third day, the visits to Group A began. Each team knew exactly where to go, at what time and which responsible would meet them there, due to the previously given agenda. In this sense, during the morning, Team One went to the Mediation Area of Lisbon, Team Two and Four to a Commercial Agency and Team Three went to the Personal Network Office. In these places, teams watched a presentation of the area, their perspective of Company A and future challenges and then each area shown to these twenty new employees how a normal day would be. Therefore, Team One went to see a client that could probably subscribe more products of Company A, Team Two and Four did some customer service and simulations, and finally, Team Three completed a challenge that consisted in adding some innovative coverage to the health insurance. The goal was clearly to engage newcomers with Company A's different activities and businesses, as well as contributing for their own networking.

Furthermore, after the visits, all teams gathered at Company A's headquarters for the afternoon talks at the auditorium, regarding other businesses and services of Company A: (1) "Brokers and Large Customers", (2) "Bank Channel", (3) "Marketing's Channels" (4) "Marketing's Omnichannel" and (5) "Innovative Offers". These presentations aimed for newcomers to understand more products and services available at Company A and the important role that Marketing has in transmitting these products and services to the different clients.

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The fourth day began once again with separate visits, only this time with some more hands-on activities. In the morning, Team One went to the Expertise and Evaluation Management Center and performed an evaluation of a car involved in a traffic accident, with the respective forecast repairment cost. Team Two went to Group A's health insurance company, in order to understand the big demand for health insurances in the past years. Besides this presentation, Team Two went on a tour through the company, meeting the different departments and learning how they contribute to the final products. Team Three went to Group A's assistance company and it was able to visit a family home that needed a repairment in their washing machine. Finally, Team Four visited another insurance company from Group A, being present in a presentation of the Director and, at the end, each member of the team tried a virtual reality game, regarding insurance services. The morning ended for all with a business lunch with several key stakeholders of Company A.

Additionally, in the afternoon of day four, the activities continued. Team One, after an assertive presentation of the company responsible for car repairments, went to do an actual car repairment. With this, this team was able to see the whole chain, from the evaluation of the accident, until the repairment of the vehicle. Team Two went to another company of Group A, responsible for the safety and health management in companies. This team went to a client's company to do an evaluation of their health and safety risks. Furthermore, Team Three, was at the real estate company of Group A and, after a presentation from the Director, it went to a construction site of a hotel, in order to see how this company operates and how risks can be avoided. Finally, Team Four went to the home assistance company of Group A, in which the Director made a quick presentation regarding the company and future challenges. After it, Team Four went to a home that was having problems with the pluming and made an evaluation of the problem.

The main objective of the fourth day, was for newcomers to see, on the field, the different services that complement the insurance products, from car evaluations and repairments, to home assistance, health and safety management. So, for the achievement of the pilot onboarding program, this holistic view of Company A was crucial for the whole employee experience, as well as contributing for their own networking.

Finally, at the end of the first week, visits continued in the morning, with Team One visiting the car insurance business, which, after the practical precious day, it was easier for them to understand the information of the presentation. Team Two went to see the work accidents business, in which they learnt with what kind of information this department deals with and what it makes to mitigate these risks. Team Three went to see the department responsible for

developing new products and improving the current ones. They were even challenged to develop an innovative product or service. And finally, Team Four visited two businesses, the first one concerning the insurance of large companies and businesses, in which they learnt what a big risk might represent and that sometimes an insurance needs a reinsurance. And then, they visited the life branch, the one that deals with life insurances, savings and investments. These presentations aimed for newcomers to understand even more products and services available at Company A, as well as contributing for their own networking and sector knowledge.

To end the day, the afternoon was dedicated to a feedback session with all the twenty newcomers, in which they could openly express their feelings, doubts or concerns regarding the whole week, what were the most positive aspects and what could be improved, as well as expectations for the next onboarding week.

The second week of onboarding, started with a two days course, regarding the products that Company A sells. It became important for the newcomers to understand the core business of Company A and how their decisions, actions and tasks can influence the different products and services of Company A.

Continuing the second onboarding week, the eighth day was spent at Company A's Contact Center, where teams were divided throughout the floors, according to the insurance issues – health, car, travelling, home, assistance, etc. In the morning, teams assisted to several client's phone calls and how supported was given. In the afternoon, with the help of professionals, newcomers were challenged to provide fictional assistance calls and to provide the necessary help to the clients, regarding accidents, doubts, advices, and other information. With this activity, newcomers sensed what it is like to talk with clients and that sometimes it is not an easy task for those professionals. Once again, they were extending their holistic view of the business.

In the ninth and tenth day of onboarding, newcomers were concentrated in Company A's headquarters, preparing the presentation for the stakeholders regarding their onboarding perspective. In this sense, the different stakeholders that were involved in the onboarding of the newcomers were all invited for this presentation session, where newcomers shared with the room and in team, how the two weeks of onboarding were for them. This was particular useful for Team O and the different stakeholders to understand their perspective and for the colleagues who did not had the chance to visit the same place. At the end of the presentations, Team O prepared a feedback session regarding the two onboarding weeks, so that newcomers could speak up their sincere opinion regarding the matter. It was crucial to understand what the most positive aspects were and what could be improved in the future.

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In sum, these were the two weeks planned for the pilot onboarding program. Two weeks in which newcomers had a holistic perspective of Company A, a new knowledge regarding its business, products and services and a new motivation for starting their new positions with a proper employee experience and integration.

4.2. Evaluation

After the twenty newcomers experienced the pilot onboarding program, it was necessary to collect their perceptions and satisfaction with the new program, and then compare the results with the ones obtained with the previous newcomers, in order to evaluate if the pilot onboarding program had or not more impact on new hires and their employee experience.

Therefore, to assess the impact of the pilot onboarding program, at the end of the two weeks as abovementioned, Team O organized a feedback session to evaluate the onboarding experience. Apart from some talks that could have had a better time management, the feedback obtained was very positive, especially when it comes to understand the company as a whole and its main businesses.

Nevertheless, it was crucial to have a more formal evaluation of the pilot onboarding program. So, as aforesaid, this was made through an online survey, sent directly to each newcomer after spending five months on the job.

4.2.1. Demographic Information

This section had the main aim to characterize the sample in terms of demographic information. The responses and analysis can be seen below.
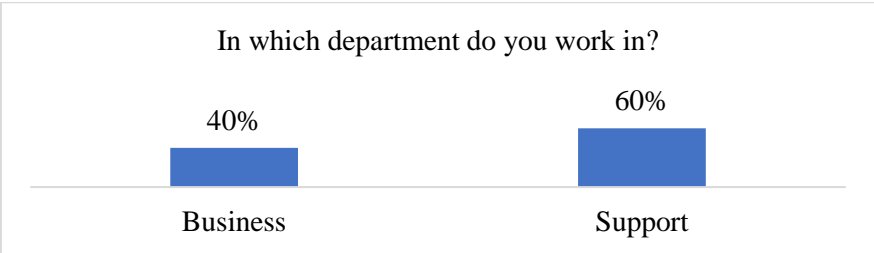
Figure 4.1 – Work department

The variable "Department" was recoded into categories, in order to better analyze the data, which originated the categorical variable "Work Area". In this case, respondents were grouped into two new categories: "Business" and "Support".

From figure 4.1 and annex O, we can see that 40% of respondents work in a business area and 60% of them work in a support area.

Table 4.1 – Respondents' gender

Gender	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Male	12	60%
Female	8	40%

From the total of twenty respondents of the survey, 40% (N = 8) were female and 60% (N = 12) were male.
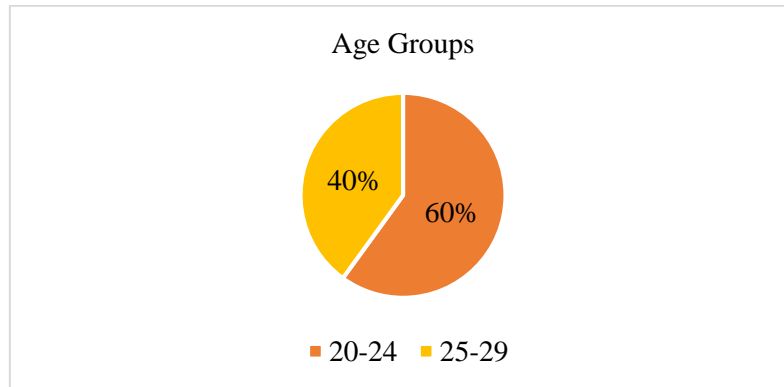
Figure 4.2 – Respondents' age groups

Overall, the youngest respondent was 22 years old while the oldest one was 28 years old. The mean value of the variable "Age" was 24.25, as we can see in annex P.

Moreover, the scale variable "Age" was also recoded into categories, in order to better analyze the data, which originated the categorical variable "Age Groups". In this case, respondents were grouped into two new categories: "20-24" and 25-29".

In this sense, 60% of respondents were between 20 and 24 years old and 40% were between 25 and 29 years old.
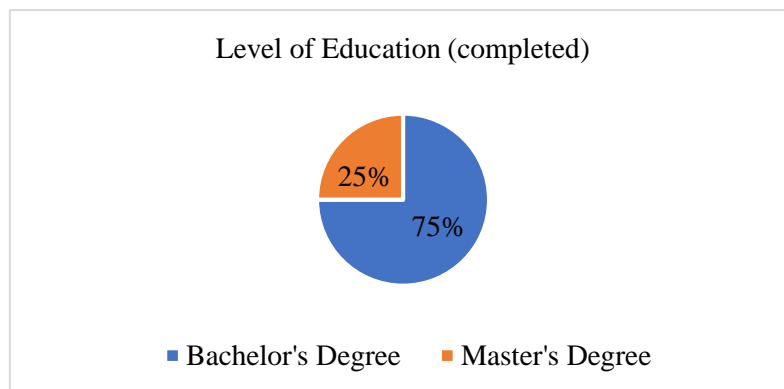
Figure 4.3 – Respondents' level of education

To conclude the sample characterization, respondents were asked to indicate their level of completed education. So, according to figure 4.3 and annex Q, 75% have a Bachelor's Degree and 25% a Master's Degree.

4.2.2. Onboarding Experience

Regarding the first question of this section, participants were asked what their level of agreement was towards several statements or parameters regarding their onboarding experience. The responses and analysis can be seen below and, in more detail, in annex R. It is important to have in mind and compare the results obtained in the previous survey (table 3.3).

Table 4.2 – Descriptive Analysis: Onboarding Experience

Level of Agreement – Onboarding Experience			
Parameter	**N**	**Mean**	**Median**
The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go.	20	3.65	4
I feel like I fit in the company culture.	20	4.05	4
I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand my job/tasks.	20	3.85	4
I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand the company as a whole.	20	4.6	5
In the onboarding process, I got to know where to go to get additional assistance on personnel matters, benefits, paperwork, etc.	20	4.3	4
I received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services.	20	4.35	5
All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected.	20	4.5	5
The onboarding process helped me feel welcomed.	20	4.8	5
I found the onboarding program interesting and interactive/dynamic.	20	4.55	5
Overall, I am satisfied with the onboarding process.	20	4.55	5

Globally, respondents agree that they were satisfied with their onboarding experience (mean = 4.55). Overall, all parameters improved in this pilot onboarding program, especially the ones that had a mean below 3. As we can see from table 4.2, respondents agree that they received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services (mean = 4.35). In this sense, the message regarding Company A's mission, history and values seems to have been effectively transmitted with the pilot onboarding program. This facilitates newcomers' integration into their teams and into the company's culture. Complementary to this, it was crucial to give newcomers the perspective of the whole company and according to table 4.2, the goal was achieved, since most respondents agree with this parameter (mean = 4.6) – a clear improvement when comparing with the previous onboarding.

Moreover, newcomers agree that "All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected" (mean = 4.5). The welcome kit is an element that can increase the sense of belonging, the whole employee experience and can have a major visual and immediate impact on

newcomers. So, the welcome kit for the pilot onboarding program was carefully planned and, as a result, newcomers reveal a great satisfaction with it.

Another goal of this pilot program was to be more dynamic for the participants. As we can see from table 4.2, newcomers agree with this parameter (mean = 4.55), which represents a clear improvement when comparing with the previous onboarding. So, as previously said, it is important to onboard newcomers in an interesting and dynamic way, so that they feel motivated to work at Company A. Moreover, it will improve their employee experience and, consequently, their performance. Therefore, the results obtained by this pilot program are very promising in doing it so.

Another great result is the one obtained in the parameter "The onboarding process helped me feel welcomed" (mean = 4.8), which reveals a great improvement from the previous onboarding and a faster induction into the new role.

To sum up, this pilot onboarding program improved the abovementioned parameters when compared with the results obtained in the previous survey and it is a crucial practice to invest in. Nevertheless, there are still some work to do in terms of pre-boarding and clarifying the future role of the newcomer or, in other terms, his career perspectives.
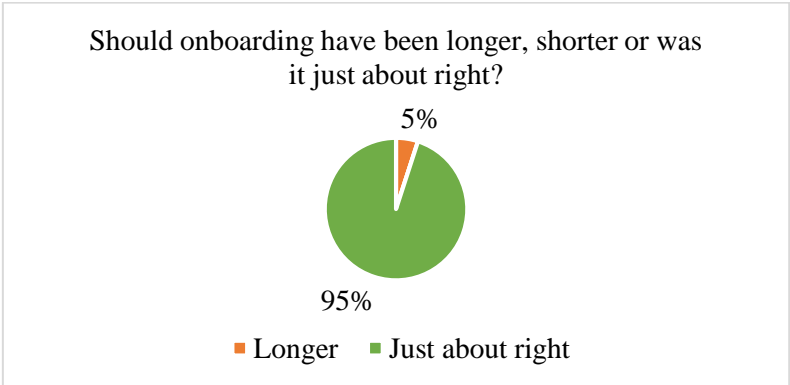
Figure 4.4 – Onboarding duration

Concerning the second question, the twenty newcomers were asked to evaluate if their onboarding experience should have been longer, shorter or if it was adequate. As we can see from figure 4.4 and annex S, the results are very positive, since 95% of participants considered it as appropriate. This reveals a great improvement when compared with the results obtained in the previous onboarding and two weeks might be the right time to dedicate exclusively to the onboarding process in Company A.
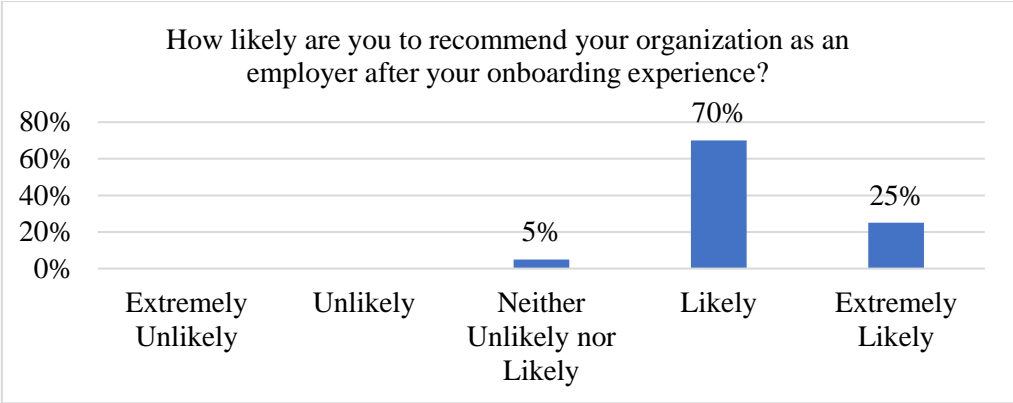
Figure 4.5 – Likelihood to recommend Company A

The third question of the survey aimed to evaluate the likelihood of respondents to recommend Company A as an employer after their onboarding experience. According to figure 4.5 and annex T, we can conclude that 70% of the respondents are "Likely" to recommend Company A as an employer and 25% are "Extremely Likely" to do it after their onboarding experience. Another great improvement that this pilot onboarding program achieved.

This pilot program seems to improve the employee experience and to contribute to the motivation of working at Company A, since most of respondents would recommend Company A as a reference in terms of employment.

Table 4.3 – Descriptive Analysis: Describe your onboarding process in one sentence

Describe your onboarding process in one sentence.		
Second Order: Categories	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Effective socialization	2	10%
Effective immersion into the Company's culture and business	6	30%
Welcoming and dynamic onboarding	12	60%

Question number four was an open one, so the responses obtained were very different. Respondents were asked to describe their onboarding process in one sentence. Therefore, to proceed with the descriptive analysis, responses had to be recoded into categories, as we can see in table 4.3. In this table we can only see the second order, but the first one is visible in the annex U. The first order analysis relates directly with the individuals' answers. The second order organizes the different responses into categories.

As we can see from table 4.3, 60% of respondents considered the pilot onboarding program to be welcoming and dynamic. Furthermore, 30% of individuals agree that it was a good start towards integration into the company's culture and business.

In conclusion, this pilot program, since it was structured and planned, seems to be effective in terms of integration and employee experience.

Table 4.4 – Descriptive Analysis: What would have made your first days better?

What would have made your first days better?		
Second Order: Categories	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Effective onboarding	10	50%
More preparation from the receiving area	2	10%
More disruptive and networking activities	4	20%
More clarification on communication and culture	2	10%
Better preparation of activities	2	10%

To conclude this section, newcomers were asked to refer what would have made their first days better. Here, the same process of coding was used as in the previous question. In this table we can only see the second order, but the first one is visible in annex V, with all the respondents' answers.

It is important to highlight that 50% of the respondents considered their onboarding to had been effective, which reveals a significant increase when compared to the previous onboarding. Nevertheless, 20% think that there is still room for "More disruptive and networking activities" in this pilot program. Also, from analyzing table 4.4, despite the small percentage (10%), it is important to ensure the correct preparation of all hiring areas when receiving a new employee.

4.2.3. Job Experience

The first question of this section asked respondents what their level of agreement was, towards several statements regarding their job experience in their first few weeks on the job. The responses and analysis can be seen below and for further information in annex W. It is important to have in mind and compare the results obtained in the previous survey (table 3.6).

Table 4.5 – Descriptive Analysis: Job Experience

Level of Agreement – Job Experience			
Parameter	N	Mean	Median
I was given all the necessary resources to perform my job successfully (including hardware, software, stationery, guidelines, ...).	20	3.95	4
My goals/tasks were clearly defined.	20	3.7	4
I have a clear understanding of my career path and perspectives/possibilities.	20	3.65	4
I received additional training to perform my job successfully (internal systems, general operating practices, …).	20	4	4
My supervisor provided me with regular feedback on my performance.	20	3.8	4
The job description and recruitment process were consistent with what I am currently experiencing.	20	3.7	4
I am proud to work for this company.	20	4.55	5
My manager was prepared for my arrival.	20	4	4
My manager checked in with me regularly to answer any questions or concerns.	20	4.4	5
I received helpful orientation to perform my job.	20	4.3	4
I feel integrated into my team.	20	4.5	5
Overall, I am satisfied with my job experience so far.	20	4.25	4

From table 4.5, we can observe that respondents agree that they are overall satisfied with their job experience (mean = 4.25) – a slight increase from the previous onboarding. In general, most parameters increased when comparing with table 3.6.

Furthermore, newcomers agree they felt welcomed on the first weeks following the onboarding (mean = 4.5). Another increase when comparing to table 3.6. These newcomers will probably obtain better performances and have a better employee experience, since the motivation in them is higher. So, onboarding once again proves to be useful in this matter. For this increase, the orientation received might also have helped, since most respondents agree with this parameter (mean = 4.3), as well as the manager's checkups (mean = 4.4) – a slight increase from the previous onboarding. When onboarding, it is crucial to provide guidance to newcomers, so that they feel integrated, in order to perform their tasks successfully. As we can see, this pilot onboarding program and the previous manager's meetings, had an influence in increasing these results.

Moreover, the parameter "I received additional training to perform my job successfully (internal systems, general operating practices, …)" considerably increased (mean = 4). The hiring managers were told to include additional training in terms of internal systems, general operating practices, among others, when receiving the newcomer. The aim was to integrate as soon as possible the new hire, so that he or she could successfully perform the new role. We

can observe in table 4.5 that the results obtained were positive in this parameter and that onboarding should continue on the job.

Regarding feedback, we can observe a slight increase in the parameter "My supervisor provided me with regular feedback on my performance" (mean = 3.8). In the future, this is still a parameter to work on. When arriving to a new role, new hires want to achieve great performances to impress their teams and managers. Therefore, feedback is really important for them and it should be provided by their managers and sometimes by their colleagues. As we can see from table 4.5, the results are good and slightly increased when compared to the previous onboarding. However, it continues to be important to increase the level of agreement with this parameter, as literature and practice showed us.

Additionally, and comparing the results with the overall satisfaction with the onboarding process and the weeks following it, onboarding seems to still have a greater impact in the beginning of the phase, but it will influence the whole newcomers' experience on the job and outside of it. It is a vital practice nowadays and another source of competitive advantage.

Table 4.6 – Descriptive Analysis: What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?

What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?		
Second Order: Categories	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Effective orientation	7	35%
Need for better organized and more diverse tasks	6	30%
Need for internal software access	4	20%
Need for training	3	15%

Since this was also an open question, the responses obtained were different from each individual. This particular question asked newcomers to refer what could have gone better in the weeks leading up to their new job. Therefore, to proceed with the descriptive analysis, responses had to be recoded into new categories, as we can see in table 4.6. However, this table only shows the second order, since the first one is visible in annex X. The first order analysis relates directly with the individuals' answers, which was used to identify the concepts collected from participants. Then, the second order, organizes the different responses into the desired categories.

Therefore, according to table 4.6, 35% of respondents considered to have had an effective orientation in the weeks leading up to the new job. Nevertheless, 30% considered that the tasks given to them, should have been more diverse, so it is important to transmit this information to

the hiring managers, in order to set more ambitious goals and tasks for future newcomers. Yet, with this pilot program, the perception for more training decreased.

4.2.4. Company A's attractiveness as an Employer

Regarding this pilot onboarding program, it was also important to analyze Company A's attractiveness from the newcomer's point of view, starting with the retention question.
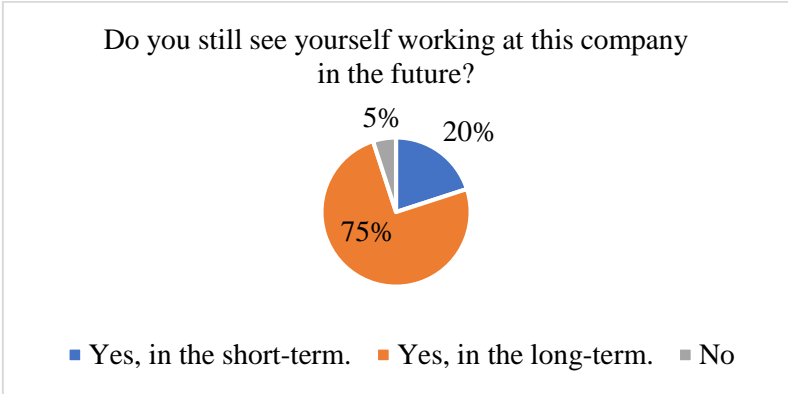
Figure 4.6 – Retention for Company A

The second question of this section aimed to evaluate if newcomers saw themselves working for Company A in the future and after the first months on the job (five in this particular case). As we can see from figure 4.6 and annex Y, the percentage regarding the option "Yes, in the long-term" slightly increased when compared to the previous onboarding, since 75% of respondents selected it and 20% of them answered "Yes, in the short-term". To conclude, it seems once again that effectively onboarding new hires makes a positive difference in terms of talent retention.
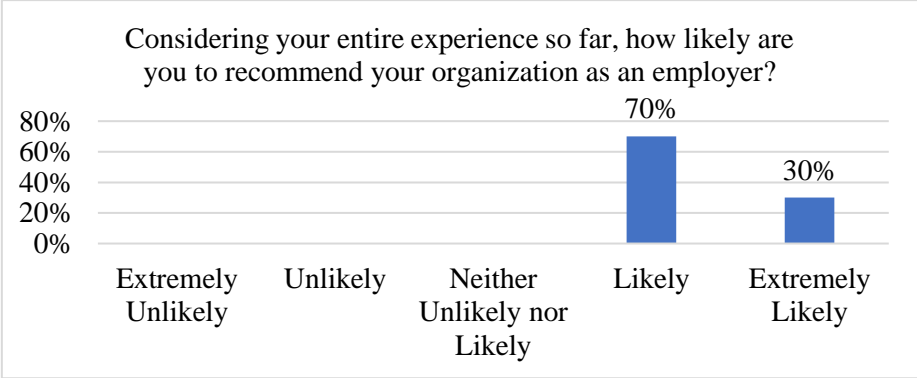
Figure 4.7 – Likelihood to recommend Company A

The third question of this section aimed to evaluate the likelihood of newcomers to recommend Company A as an employer after their experience in the past few months. As we can observe from figure 4.7 and annex Z, 70% of the respondents are "Likely" to recommend

Company A as an employer and 30% are "Extremely Likely". This represents an astonishing increase of the results when compared to the previous onboarding.

4.3. Implementation Proposal

Although this thesis focuses mainly on a pilot onboarding program design and testing, it becomes important to present a vision of how, in the future, this program should be implemented and evaluated. Firstly, there are still some work to do in this pilot onboarding program, namely, in terms of creating more structured feedback moments, as pointed out by the newcomers. This feedback touchpoints might allow a faster and better integration into the new role and company culture, as well as a better employee experience. Moreover, this program was designed for two weeks, however, in a year, Company A recruits, on average, sixty new employees. So, the proposal is to gather a class of twenty and execute this program three times a year for instance. With this, it is easier to organize agendas, activities and deal with unexpected situations.

So, to extend this onboarding program to any newcomer, several steps must be taken. Since that exists so many stakeholders – Recruitment and Selection team, Learning and Development team, Payroll team, Talent team and hiring areas – involved in a hiring and welcoming of a new employee, it is crucial to align them all in this new project, to ensure a continuous process.

In this sense, Team O should once again gather with these stakeholders, to present why performing a structured onboarding, the goals and benefits of the program, the different activities that the newcomers are going to experience, what is the role of each stakeholder and how the program will be evaluated. Regarding the why, goals and benefits, these was already presented above, and the process is the same as in the pilot onboarding program. However, it is important to refer how each stakeholder will understand their role in the onboarding process. For this meeting, Team O must bring a checklist to each stakeholder, so that they know exactly what it is expected from them. Besides, Team O is responsible for presenting the checklist to the different hiring managers that they are allocated to. The onboarding checklist can be seen below.

- Recruitment and Selection Team
  - Before entrance
    - Align with the hiring manager the entrance date, time and meeting place.
    - Send an invite to the newcomer's e-mail with the main information for the first day and the process conclusion, congratulating him or her once again.

- ▪ Keep in touch with the new hire, so that the employee experience starts even before the first day of work.
  - o First day
    - ▪ Introduce himself and conduct a small meeting in which he or she presents to the newcomer the fundamentals – the role, the main tools, training possibilities and career perspectives.
    - ▪ Delivery of the welcome kit, creating a faster sense of belonging.
  - o First week
    - ▪ Schedule a feedback meeting, in order to evaluate any concern of the newcomer and to present where he or she stands in terms of integration and performance.
  - o First month
    - ▪ Schedule another feedback meeting with the newcomer, but this time over a breakfast, in order to evaluate the employee experience so far, but in a more casual environment.
    - ▪ Send an online survey to evaluate more deeply the first days of work and onboarding of the newcomer.
  - o First year
    - ▪ Schedule a formal feedback session, to evaluate the first year of the new employee.
    - ▪ Send a final online survey, to evaluate the first year at Company A, with also the purpose of improving the employee experience and job satisfaction.

- • Payroll
  - o Before entrance
    - ▪ Ensure the necessary documentation to conclude the hiring.
    - ▪ Inform the IT department of the new hire, in order for them to create the profile and accesses.
    - ▪ Schedule the medical exams.
    - ▪ Send the contract to the newcomer and an invitation letter for the signing.
  - o First day
    - ▪ Ensure the signing of the contract by both parts.
    - ▪ Inform the security department to take a picture of the newcomer, in order to ensure the production of the employee's card.

- - Present to the newcomer the main benefits that he or she can access.
  - Inform the newcomer about possible transportation for the building or parking lots nearby.
  - First year
    - Update, renovate or change any contract if necessary or asked.
- Hiring Manager
  - Before entrance
    - Transmit to the Recruitment and Selection team about the first day of work of the new hire.
    - Ask to the IT department to put the e-mail of the newcomer in the respective e-mailing lists of the area.
    - Ask to the logistics department for the new workplace, so that all can be prepared for the arrival of the new employee.
    - Send an e-mail to the team, informing that they are going to receive a new colleague and that they also have the responsibility to integrate him or her as soon as possible.
    - Ask, via e-mail, to the newcomer a small biography, in order to release an internal communication with it.
    - Schedule any relevant or necessary training for the newcomer to perform his or her new job.
    - Send an invitation for a team lunch, creating engagement with the newcomer as soon as possible.
    - Define the agenda for the first week of work of the new employee.
  - First day
    - Present to the new hire his or her expectations and main responsibilities.
    - Present the newcomer to the team, department, director and buddy.
    - Ensure a moment for the newcomer to get to know the buddy and for them to exchange contact information.
    - Visit with the newcomer the building and main places (cafeteria, bathrooms, meeting rooms, training rooms, etc.).
  - First week
    - Show to the newcomer the strategic objectives of the area, main tools and tasks.
    - Explain in more detail the job description.

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- ▪ Support the newcomer in the configuration of the computer, e-mail, accesses, etc.
  - o First month
    - ▪ Schedule a meeting to present the performance appraisal tool, objectives and process.
    - ▪ Present the career possibilities inside the area.
    - ▪ Define the level of autonomy with which each newcomer is comfortable with.
    - ▪ Schedule a feedback session.
  - o First year
    - ▪ Send a celebration letter of the first year at the role.
    - ▪ Schedule a formal feedback session.

In the light of this and at the end of the two-week activities, it becomes important once again to evaluate the onboarding program, from the newcomer's point of view, in order to assess the impact on the employee experience, job satisfaction or motivation, performance and will to stay at Company A. In this sense, at the end of the two-week program, the feedback session must continue to collect the opinions, worries and positive aspects of the program, so that it improves each time it is performed for both Company A and newcomer.

Furthermore, five months after this two-week activities, Team O must send an online survey to the newcomers, in order to evaluate, in a deeper level, their satisfaction regarding the onboarding and job experience, their level of recommendation and will to work for Company A and, finally, what aspects can be improved in the future, when onboarding new hires. This survey is, in its essence, similar to the one applied in the pilot onboarding program, but in a larger scale and with bigger results to work on.

According to the aforementioned and based on the current situation of Company A and Portugal due to COVID-19, the prediction is to launch this program in the beginning of 2021. However, until the end of 2020, all stakeholders involved, must be aware of this new onboarding process, so that everything is prepared for the beginning of next year. Alongside next year, it is also important for Team O to watch closely the execution of this onboarding program, so that everything goes with the plan and everyone knows what to do. Besides, Team O must ensure the different two-weeks actions along the year, as previously mentioned.

4.4. Main Conclusions

In terms of the two-week program, newcomers find themselves very satisfied with the pilot onboarding program, as we saw also by the improvement of almost every parameter evaluated in the survey. In fact, 80% of respondents considered it to be really welcoming and effective, which raised the motivation and fit with the company culture. It might explain why 95% of respondents considered the duration of the pilot onboarding program to be just about right.

Furthermore, newcomers got to know, in a more effective and deeper way, Company A in a more holistic view, from its different teams, products and services, to its mission, values and history. All of this was achieved, as abovementioned, in a more dynamic, practical and interactive way.

Additionally, the welcome kit was something that Team O had to improve and carefully plan. As we could see from the answers, the goal was fulfilled and newcomers got elements that transmitted a better sense of belonging, which is essential when starting a new career path.

The onboarding experience also revealed that 95% of newcomers would recommend Company A as an employer and as a reference in the market. All thanks to the onboarding program that they experienced.

Regarding the job experience, 95% of newcomers find themselves satisfied with it and feel a greater sense of welcoming and belonging when arriving to their hiring areas. Not only were their managers better prepared for their arrival, but also the first few weeks were better planned. Another parameter that contributed for these good results, was the increase in training that newcomers received, especially when it comes to internal processes that will help them to perform better and to achieve their goals faster.

Also, according to the results obtained, feedback is still a practice to be improved in the future or in a future onboarding program, and that respondents considered to be crucial. It is important for newcomers to know where they stand in several touchpoints over the onboarding period.

All of the above, granted a recommendation of Company A as an employer, from the newcomers, of 100%, after spending five months on the new job. Another confirmation that an effective and planned onboarding program makes all the difference in the employee experience.

To sum up, the whole purpose of these two weeks and the way they were planned and executed, was two contribute to a great employee experience and engage these newcomers with Company A, so that they could feel more motivated to perform their job duties and Company A could collect the natural benefits of it, as well as retain these new employees. Furthermore,

besides being just a pilot program, Company A can take advantage of it and become a reference in the market and in human resources best practices, but that only time will tell.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

This thesis focused on the influence of well-planned and structured onboarding programs on the whole employee experience, specifically with a pilot onboarding program designed for Company A. In fact, this kind of investments boosts companies' profits and consolidate their competitive advantage, especially when we talk about talent retention, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (one of the most desirable aspects for an organization). Motivated employees are, usually, better performers and achieve their goals faster.

Some companies in Portugal still perceive the onboarding process as a cost. Nevertheless, there are some that are finally paying more attention to these kind of human resources practices that benefit both employees and companies. Nowadays, no one can stay indifferent to onboarding if it wants to be a reference in the market. However, it is important to recognize that companies, cultures and people are different, therefore it is crucial to design this kind of processes and programs according to the reality that they are going to be applied to, which was exactly what was made for Company A – a company that realized that onboarding was an opportunity to effectively induct new hires, rather than a two hours class. It is simply not enough to "just" integrate a new employee. In fact, integration and knowledge transfer work better if they come from different sources and perspectives (Viana, Conte & de Souza, 2014; Meyer & Bartels, 2017). In truth, it was in the light of the previous notions that the pilot onboarding program was created and designed.

As we saw, onboarding can be defined as the process of inducting a new hire into his or her new role, but also into the company's culture, strategy and mission. The main goal of onboarding is to support newcomers in understanding a given company as a whole, from policies and procedures, to its mission, values and culture, besides being a great integration and socialization practice – it is important to maintain the focus on the newcomer and to empower him or her, while rolling out the onboarding process.

Furthermore, according to the literature, onboarding can be a source of self-identity development, critical thinking and individual capabilities (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013; Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019). This not only influences the employee experience, but also how long and in what terms a new hire is going to stay at a given organization. And since 90% of new hires decide whether they stay or not at a given company in the first six months of work, it is important to invest in making a great onboarding program, in order to increase talent retention and to effectively use the recruitment and selection budgets (Aberdeen Research, 2006).

Moreover, organizations that invest time, effort, dedication and resources into newcomers, often collect the benefits and perks of it, while at the same time, provide an amazing employee experience (Carucci, 2018).

As explained, this thesis is characterized by being an action research, since there was an organizational problem, in this case regarding the onboarding of Company A. In the light of the analysis and results obtained before the pilot onboarding program, Company A realized that it wanted to make onboarding an investment for the future, due to all the benefits that could bring to all the stakeholders involved. Not only in terms of providing a better knowledge of the company to the newcomers, but also in terms of presenting, in a clear way, its business and the insurance sector. All of this potentiates job satisfaction, talent retention and competitive advantage.

However, before the designing of the pilot onboarding program that would effectively induct new hires into Company A and their new roles, it became important to diagnose the problem, to plan and execute a solution with the involvement of other employees and, finally, to evaluate the results. Furthermore, we wanted to improve the employee experience of any newcomer, which was in fact achieved when analyzing the results obtained in chapter 4.

The document analysis allowed for a better understanding on the importance and consequences of onboarding and why it would benefit both organizations and newcomers. Moreover, this method allowed a clear diagnosis of what Company A was doing in terms of onboarding.

In what concerns the benchmarking research, it was possible to assess what is currently being done in the market or in other companies in terms of the best human resources practices regarding onboarding, which are the main objectives or purpose of onboarding and what instruments best evaluate the employee experience. This research was conducted by three real cases – Shufutinsky and Cox, DigitalOcean and Zapier. With these three cases, we found out that it is important for newcomers to have access to the information regarding their first few days right from the start and in a very dynamic and interactive way, such as the one presented in the pilot onboarding program and to have feedback sessions regarding their integration. Another learning point regarding the benchmarking made, is that onboarding also serves the purpose of transmitting to new hires their goals, career path, main tasks, among other responsibilities. This potentiates motivated employees, better performers and talent retention for the organization.

Through the first survey, we observed that many aspects of the previous onboarding process had to be improved in the pilot onboarding program, such as increasing the duration of it, giving

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a holistic perspective of Company A, making Company A a reference in the market in terms of employment, creating feedback touchpoints and increasing the hours of training in order for newcomers to perform better, among others.

The last instrument applied, the interview, allowed a deeper understanding on Company A's onboarding. One of the main aspects referred by the manager, is that Company A had a lack of alignment regarding the parties that take part in the onboarding process and that there was a need for a common goal or path. Furthermore, he believes that it is better to spread the information transmitted to the newcomer across more days, rather than giving it all in the first day, since it becomes a very superficial data and, consequently, it becomes difficult to provide a wide perspective of the whole company. Additionally, it is of major importance to involve other teams in the onboarding process, so that the information provided, or the activities made are relevant and diverse.

In short terms, the pilot onboarding program was tested in twenty new hires, over a two-week period. The program had as main objectives to point out the benefits on an effective induction, but also to increase the speed of integration and the will to stay in Company A, due to an intensification of job satisfaction and employee experience. And for this, the key was not only to involve the Human Resources department in the process, but also some key stakeholders of different areas of Company A – for change to happen, it is important to involve people in the process. From Team O's perspective, this pilot onboarding program was a success and a good starting point of a future consolidated onboarding program. Not only by the diverse activities in it, but also by the faster integration this program provides to a new hire.

In order to evaluate if the objectives had been fulfilled and if the required improvements had been achieved, Team O organized a feedback session, for the newcomers, to evaluate the onboarding experience. Apart from some talks that could have been better timely managed, all the twenty newcomers provided positive feedback on the program and claimed to have a clear basic knowledge on Company A's business and culture, which is fundamental for the role they will play in it.

Additionally, Team O sent an online survey, five months later, to the twenty newcomers, to assess their satisfaction, opinion and even if they had anything they would like to change or improve in the program. Comparing to the previous survey and as analyzed above, almost all parameters improved with the pilot onboarding program: now 80% of respondents considered it to be very welcoming and 100% of them considered to have a holistic perspective on Company A, which will help them to better understand their tasks and objectives. Another great evaluated parameter is the one that assess the probability of recommending Company A as an

employer: almost 95% of newcomers would recommend it, after the onboarding experience. This constitutes an important step for Company A to become a reference in the market as a great employer.

Continuing on the survey analysis, 95% of respondents evaluated their job satisfaction as excellent and reveal a greater sense of belonging when comparing to the first twenty newcomers that experienced the old onboarding program. This might be associated with the fact that the new onboarding program considers training as fundamental when arriving to a new role, which was contemplated and discussed with the Learning and Development team and the hiring managers. This potentiates more motivated employees and, consequently, better performers.

To sum up, the objectives of the whole project were achieved as we can observe from this action research. Not only the employee experience got better, but also the engagement of newcomers with Company A improved, as well as the job satisfaction and motivation to achieve great performances. Altogether, Company A might improve talent retention and consolidate its competitive advantage in the market.

Moreover, and looking at a wider perspective, it is my firm belief that each company needs different human resources practices. In terms of onboarding, this pilot onboarding program works better for companies with a big structure and a diversity of products or services. So, with this being said, this pilot program, with the due changes and adaptations to the reality applied, might work not only for Company A or not only in other company from the insurance sector, but also in other sectors, such as the retail one, in which operating companies also have big structures and a variety of people, products and services.

However, it becomes also important to acknowledge and recognize the limitations of this action research, especially in what concerns the methodology.

Firstly, the sample size should have been bigger, in both groups of newcomers. But, due to internal decisions of Company A and agenda's management, the objective of the pilot onboarding program was to be tested in only twenty newcomers, so the same sample size was utilized in the first group of newcomers. In addition to this, the sample should have been more diverse in terms of the ages of the newcomers that experienced the pilot onboarding program, in order to meet the ones of the previous onboarding program. Furthermore, with a bigger sample, the results obtained in the surveys could have been stronger and more supportive regarding the pilot program. Nonetheless, in the future it is important to take these two aspects into account and to apply this action research to a bigger sample if possible, especially in terms of age diversity.

Secondly, this action research has a lack of empirical studies, that cover onboarding in other companies, sectors or even markets. Not only in terms of practices, but also regarding the methods used. This could have been particularly useful when designing the pilot onboarding program, in order to see other trends or human resources inclinations and other evaluation instruments. Nevertheless, the methodology applied was very useful for this action research.

Continuing on the limitations of this action research, not only there exists a lack of empirical studies, but also an additional field research could have been conducted. In other words, it would have been beneficial for the results of this thesis, to have invested more in the investigation and contact with other companies, not only in the insurance sector, but also other companies with a big structure, such as retail. This could have allowed a faster understanding on other great onboarding programs and practices in Portugal, that could have been studied and partially reproduced, in some ways, at Company A. This possible market study could also have permitted to observe other sectors and to learn more about other human resources trends that provide a greater employee experience, job motivation and talent retention – aspects that also potentiate competitive advantage. Therefore, in the future, it is important to make a deeper investigation into the market, in order to evaluate other onboarding programs and to improve the one designed for Company A. This additional data will provide stronger reasons to prove why onboarding should be seen as an investment rather than a cost.

Overall, this thesis brings some contributions to research and for a very updated and recent theme in organizations – onboarding. For many years, organizations saw the Human Resources department as the ones who hire, dismiss and pay the salaries. However, it is a growing department in many organizations, with more responsibilities each day and that potentiates change and competitive advantage.

In the light of this thought, companies also search for competitive advantage from within. It is of major importance for any organization to obtain good results in the market, but that comes from the people in it. Therefore, employees must be motivated to achieve their goals, but also the companies' objectives. As we saw, this motivation, this employee experience and this talent retention starts on day one. So, it is important to make a proper welcome, to effectively integrate and induct each new hire into the company's history, mission, vision and business, so that each employee knows exactly what is expected from him or her and how his tasks will influence the company as a whole – and it all starts with an effective and disruptive onboarding program.

Finally, and as demonstrated, this action research contributed with a new kind of onboarding program. One that gives newcomers new possibilities to feel welcome, to know

their new company and to have the best possible integration into the new role. With this, newcomers can actually live a great employee experience and work at a company that puts their people into first place, seeing them as the most important resource of all.

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Annexes

Annex A – Survey

A Influência dos Programas de *Onboarding* na Experiência do Colaborador

Caro/a participante,

O presente questionário insere-se no âmbito do Mestrado em Gestão da ISCTE Business School, tendo como objetivo recolher a sua opinião sobre alguns aspetos relacionados com a sua experiência de *onboarding* e como esta prática contribuiu para a sua experiência profissional na Companhia.

A sua participação é anónima e confidencial, não tendo quaisquer riscos para si. Todas as respostas são importantes e serão alvo de tratamento estatístico agregado, não sendo possível identificar qualquer participante individualmente, nem o nome da Companhia. Os dados serão apenas utilizados para fins académicos, mais concretamente para a obtenção do grau de mestre.

Não existem respostas certas ou erradas. O que interessa é a sua opinião sobre a sua experiência. Procure responder a todas as questões de forma espontânea e sincera, sem se deter demasiado tempo em cada uma delas.

Obrigado pela disponibilidade e atenção.

Para informações/esclarecimentos sobre o presente questionário: fmlav@iscte-iul.pt

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Experiência de *Onboarding*

1. Pense na sua experiência de *onboarding**...

* Processo de integração e apresentação de um novo colaborador à sua nova função e cultura da empresa. Dar a conhecer ao colaborador os objetivos, missão, valores, regras, políticas e processos da organização, bem como potenciar o processo de socialização do colaborador com as diferentes equipas e áreas.

1.1. Escolha uma das respostas de 1 a 5, de acordo com o seu grau de concordância (1 - Discordo Totalmente, 2 - Discordo, 3 - Não Discordo Nem Concordo, 4 - Concordo, 5 - Concordo Totalmente).

	1	2	3	4	5
A informação que recebi antes do meu primeiro dia, ajudou-me a saber o que esperar e para onde ir.					
Identifico-me com a cultura da empresa.					
Sinto que o meu *onboarding* me ajudou a compreender melhor o meu trabalho/tarefas.					
Sinto que o meu *onboarding* me ajudou a ter uma visão holística da empresa.					
No *onboarding*, compreendi onde teria de me dirigir para receber ajuda, em termos de dúvidas, esclarecimentos, declarações, benefícios, etc.					
Recebi informação útil acerca da história da Companhia, os seus produtos e serviços.					
Todos os elementos do meu "*welcome kit*" cumpriram as minhas expectativas.					
O meu *onboarding* ajudou-me a sentir integrado e bem-vindo.					
Considero que o meu *onboarding* foi interessante e interativo/dinâmico.					
De um modo geral, estou satisfeito com o meu *onboarding*.					

1.2. Em termos de duração, o meu *onboarding* foi:

○ Demasiado longo

○ Demasiado curto

○ Adequado

1.3. Qual a probabilidade de recomendar a Companhia como empregador, após o seu processo de *onboarding*?

Extremamente Improvável   O O O O O   Extremamente Provável
1   2   3   4   5

1.4. Descreva o seu *onboarding* numa frase.

_____.

1.5. De que forma é que os seus primeiros dias na Companhia poderiam ter sido melhores?

_____.

1.6. Se tiver comentários adicionais relativamente ao seu *onboarding*, poderá colocá-los aqui:

_____.

Experiência de trabalho

2. Pense agora na sua experiência de trabalho após as primeiras semanas na função…

2.1. Escolha uma das respostas de 1 a 5, de acordo com o seu grau de concordância (1 - Discordo Totalmente, 2 - Discordo, 3 - Não Discordo Nem Concordo, 4 - Concordo, 5 - Concordo Totalmente).

	1	2	3	4	5
Tinha disponíveis todos os recursos necessários para poder desempenhar com sucesso o meu trabalho (ex.: hardware; software; secretária; caderno, caneta e similares; orientações, ...).					
Os meus objetivos/tarefas foram bem definidos.					
Compreendo as minhas perspetivas/possibilidades de carreira.					
Recebi formação/orientações adicionais de forma a desempenhar com sucesso o meu trabalho (sistemas internos, boas práticas do dia-a-dia, etc.).					
Recebia feedback regular do meu responsável, relativamente ao meu desempenho.					
A descrição da função e o processo de recrutamento foram consistentes com a minha experiência.					
Tenho orgulho em trabalhar na Companhia.					
O meu supervisor estava preparado para a minha chegada.					
O meu supervisor perguntava-me se tinha alguma dúvida ou preocupação adicional.					
Recebi a orientação necessária para desempenhar com sucesso o meu trabalho.					
Sinto-me integrado na minha equipa.					
De um modo geral, estou satisfeito com a minha experiência.					

2.2.   O que poderia ter corrido melhor nas suas primeiras semanas na função?

_____.

2.3.   Se tiver comentários adicionais relativamente à sua experiência na função, poderá colocá-los aqui:

_____.

Atratividade da Organização

3. A atratividade da minha empresa como entidade empregadora…

3.1.   Há quanto tempo se encontra na Companhia?

_____.

3.2.   No futuro, vê-se a trabalhar na Companhia?

○ Sim, a curto-prazo.

○ Sim, a longo-prazo.

○ Não.

3.3.   Considerando a sua experiência até agora, qual a probabilidade de recomendar a Companhia como entidade empregadora?

Extremamente Improvável   O O O O O   Extremamente Provável

                            1 2 3 4 5

Dados demográficos

4. Dados demográficos

4.1.   Qual o seu departamento?

_____.

4.2.   Género?

○ Feminino

○ Masculino

○ Prefiro não dizer

4.3.   Idade

_____.

4.4.   Habilitações Literárias (completado)

○ Licenciatura

○ Mestrado

○ Doutoramento

○ Pós-Graduação

Annex B – Interview script

1. De que forma está a empresa a realizar a integração de novos colaboradores?
2. Como é que vê o futuro do *onboarding* na empresa?

Annex C – Work department

Area	Which department do you work in?	
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Business	9	45%
Support	11	55%

Annex D – Respondents' age groups

Age	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean
23	2	10%	
24	5	25%	
25	2	10%	
26	4	20%	
27	4	20%	25,9
28	1	5%	
30	1	5%	
32	1	5%	

Annex E – Respondents' level of education

Level of Education (completed)	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Bachelor's Degree	5	25%
Master's Degree	11	55%
Doctorate's Degree	0	0%
Post-Graduation	4	20%

Annex F – Descriptive Analysis: Onboarding Experience

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 1

Level of Agreement	The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Disagree	5	25%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%	3.45	4
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	3	15%		

As we can see from the table above, that respects the parameter "The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go", most respondents tend to agree with this parameter (mean = 3.45). 50% or more of the twenty respondents, selected at

maximum the option "Somewhat Agree" (median = 4). It is important to observe that one quarter of the sample "Somewhat Disagree" with parameter 1.

The very first day of any employee can be stressful. So, onboarding plays a major role in decreasing these anxieties, so that newcomers can start their first day with the minimum worries as possible. This is a parameter that needs some improvement in the pilot onboarding program.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 2

Level of Agreement	I feel like I fit in the company culture.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4	4
Somewhat Disagree	3	15%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	7	35%		

Globally, respondents agree that they fit into the company's culture (mean = 4). According to the table above, at least 50% of the respondents answered at least to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 2 (median = 4) and only 15% to "Somewhat Disagree" with it.

Therefore, onboarding plays an effective role in terms of transmitting the company's culture for newcomers, integrating them into it, which contributes for a better employee experience.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 3

Level of Agreement	I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand my job/tasks.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	3.65	4
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%		
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

In general, individuals tend to agree that their onboarding helped them to better understand their tasks (mean = 3.65). Moreover, 50% or more of individuals answered to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 3 (median = 4) and only 10% "Somewhat Disagree" with this parameter.

It is important to have a clear understating on what are the main tasks of a new role. Newcomers want from day one to impress and to contribute as soon as possible for the overall results. So, as we can see, there are still some gaps in explaining clearly what are going to be the main tasks of the newcomer. A structured onboarding program might be effective in this matter.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 4

Level of Agreement	I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand the company as a whole.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	3.2	3
Somewhat Disagree	4	20%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	6	30%		
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	1	5%		

Overall, respondents tend to agree that the onboarding process helped them a bit in understanding the company as a whole (mean = 3.2). Additionally, 50% or more of respondents selected at maximum the option "Neither Agree Nor Disagree". It is relevant to highlight that 40% of respondents "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 4.

It becomes important for newcomers not only to know and comprehend their new area, but also the company as a whole, because newcomers' decisions and tasks will have an impact, sooner or later, in other areas of the business. In this sense, onboarding might be an effective practice to transmit this information. As we can see from the table above, it is a parameter to improve on the pilot onboarding program.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 5

Level of Agreement	In the onboarding process, I got to know where to go to get additional assistance on personnel matters, benefits, paperwork, etc.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	3.75	4
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

Globally, individuals tend to agree with parameter 5 (mean = 3.75). Furthermore, at least 50% of individuals answered to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 5 and 20% to "Strongly Agree". When newcomers first arrive to a company, they know few people, processes or even the benefits that they are entitled to, which may cause discomfort or stress. Therefore, onboarding is an effective human resources' practice to introduce newcomers to people and teams, to teach them where to go or what to do in case of different matters or need for assistance. Furthermore, we understand that most people have access to this information, but it can become hard to get there or the information might be confusing sometimes.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 6

Level of Agreement	I received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	2.9	3
Somewhat Disagree	8	40%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%		
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	1	5%		

In parameter 6, the results were not that good, and individuals tend to disagree with it (mean = 2.9). Moreover, 50% or more of respondents selected at maximum the option "Neither Agree Nor Disagree" and 40% to "Somewhat Disagree". Nevertheless, it becomes important to

highlight that 30% of respondents "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 6, which corresponds to six individuals in twenty.

As previously said, it is important for newcomers to know and understand the company as a whole, in this case Company A, because their decisions will influence, one way or another, the different areas of the company. Besides, each company as its specific way of doing things, its beliefs and values and Company A is no different. Therefore, people need to feel that they belong and that they understand the main businesses or operating areas of Company A. As we can see from the table above, it is a parameter that can benefit a lot from an onboarding program, in order to transmit all the knowledge.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 7

Level of Agreement	All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	6	30%	2.55	2.5
Somewhat Disagree	4	20%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	3	15%		
Strongly Agree	2	10%		

In what regards parameter 7, the results are even lower, and respondents tend to disagree in terms of the expectations that they had regarding the welcome kit (mean = 2.55). In fact, 30% of individuals answered to "Strongly Disagree" with parameter 7 and 20% to "Somewhat Disagree" with it (half of the sample in just these two levels).

A welcome kit is one of the first aspects that contain the company's personalized items, that are useful and cheerful for the newcomer's work. It is an item that can boost the sense of belonging and the whole employee experience. So, when thinking in the pilot onboarding program, it is important to carefully design this welcome kit, in order to be innovative, but also close to the newcomer. From the table above, we understand that it is an aspect that needs improvements in the pilot program.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 8

Level of Agreement	The onboarding process helped me feel welcomed.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	3.3	3
Somewhat Disagree	4	20%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	6	30%		
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	3	15%		

Overall, respondents tend to agree with parameter 8 (mean = 3.3). However, the numbers are also not impressive and at least 50% of respondents selected at maximum the option "Neither Agree Nor Disagree" (median = 3). Nonetheless, we observe that 30% of respondents "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 8.

Due to all the anxieties and possible stresses of the first few days of newcomers at their work, it is important to welcome and integrate them as soon as possible. Inevitably, the first impact is the onboarding, so from the results obtained, it must be carefully designed to fulfil this parameter.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 9

Level of Agreement	I found the onboarding program interesting and interactive/dynamic.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	2	10%	3.05	3
Somewhat Disagree	5	25%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	6	30%		
Somewhat Agree	4	20%		
Strongly Agree	3	15%		

Parameter 9 also reveals average results and individuals tend to agree with it (mean = 3.05). Actually, 50% or more of respondents selected at maximum the option "Neither Agree Nor Disagree" (median = 3). Nonetheless, 25% of respondents "Somewhat Disagree" that their onboarding program was interesting and dynamic.

Inevitably, newcomers have expectations regarding the first days into the new role or into the company. So, it is important to onboard them in an interesting and dynamic way, so that they feel motivated to work at Company A. Furthermore, it will boost their employee experience and, consequently, their performance.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 10

Level of Agreement	Overall, I am satisfied with the onboarding process.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	3.15	3
Somewhat Disagree	5	25%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	1	5%		

Finally, respondents tend to agree once again that they were somewhat satisfied with their onboarding (mean = 3.15). However, at least 50% of respondents selected at maximum the option "Neither Agree Nor Disagree" (median = 3). Important to highlight that 40% of respondents "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 10.

In conclusion, it is important that the pilot onboarding program improves the abovementioned parameters.

Annex G – Onboarding duration

Onboarding duration	Should onboarding have been longer, shorter or was it just about right?	
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Longer	11	55%
Shorter	0	0%
Just about right	9	45%

Annex H – Likelihood to recommend Company A

Recommendation level	How likely are you to recommend your organization as an employer after your onboarding experience?			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Extremely Unlikely	0	0%	3,7	4
Unlikely	2	10%		
Neither Unlikely nor Likely	5	25%		
Likely	10	50%		
Extremely Likely	3	15%		

Annex I – Descriptive Analysis: Describe your onboarding process in one sentence.

Describe your onboarding process in one sentence.			
First Order: Concepts	Second Order: Categories	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Pouco estruturado	Need for Onboarding planning and execution	7	35%
Curto			
ineficaz			
Não existente			
Objetivo, mas curto			
Adequado, mas faltou algum planeamento			
demasiada informação			
Conversa com o meu chefe.	Need for leadership involvement and feedback	2	10%
Foi muito confuso, e pouco acompanhado pela minha liderança e equipa.			
Ambiente muito acolhedor e simpático mas pouco apoio a nível de formação técnica	Need for Business Training	5	25%
Considero que foi pouco formativo do ponto de vista de conhecimento do negócio			
Faltou um pouco de contexto, produtos, etc…, fraco ao nível de welcome kit			
Apesar de numa sala, a visão geral da companhia permitiu compreender o negócio como um todo			
Diferente da expectativa que tinha e do conhecimento da empresa			
Um acolhimento que nos faz "sentir em casa"	Effective Welcoming	6	30%
envolvente na cultura Fidelidade			
dinamico			
Espaço de boas vindas e integração na companhia.			
Foi uma experiencia enriquecedora.			
O onboarding foi motivador.			

Annex J – Descriptive Analysis: What would have made your first days better?

What would have made your first days better?			
First Order: Concepts	**Second Order: Categories**	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Maior inclusão por parte da restante equipa	Need for team support	3	15%
Com mais acompanhamento e mais informação sobre os projetos da área e tarefas dos vários membros da equipa.			
maior apoio dos colegas			
Talvez com uma visita às várias áreas da empresa para compreender o negócio no seu todo.	Need for effective Company training	5	25%
Penso que dentro do primeiro mês, deveria existir uma formação de introdução ampla.			
Mais formação técnica. Não apenas sentar atrás de uma pessoa que está a trabalhar e tentar reter o que a mesma faz.			
A obter uma visão global da empresa e conhecer diretamente/presencialmente todos os key stakeholders da minha área e dos meus projetos			
Enquadramento das atividades numa perspectiva mais geral da empresa. Interação com pessoas de outras áreas com quem iria desenvolver trabalho no futuro.			
mais dinâmico e com uma presença mais forte dos RH	Need for more Human Resources intervention	2	10%
No primeiro dia, penso que teria sido mais adequado o encaminhamente em primeiro lugar para os RH e posteriormente para a minha direção.			
Com um programa de onboarding mais estruturado e abrangente	Need for an Onboarding planning and execution	4	20%
Integração diferente, por exemplo, onde outros colegas poderiam ser agrupados de forma a fazer um onboarding mais coletivo e dinâmico			
mais dinâmico			
cartao de acesso disponibilizado mais cedo			
Penso que foi bom como foi.	Effective Onboarding	6	30%
Tive um bom acompanhamento desde início. Não tenho nada a apontar de melhorias no acolhimento.			
Sem comentários adicionais			
sem nenhum comentário adicional			
Gostei dos meus primeiros dias. Não tenho nada a acrescentar			
Penso que não seria necessario alterar qualquer coisa.			

Annex K – Descriptive Analysis: Job Experience

Job Experience – Parameter 1

Level of Agreement	I was given all the necessary resources to perform my job successfully (including hardware, software, stationery, guidelines, ...).			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	2	10%		
Somewhat Disagree	1	5%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	10%	3.95	4
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	9	45%		

In a general way, respondents tend to agree that they were provided with the necessary resources to perform their job successfully (mean = 3.95). 30% of respondents selected the option "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 1 and 45% to "Strongly Agree".

Onboarding continues on the first few weeks of work, so it is a component of it, to ensure that newcomers have the resources to perform their job and tasks successfully. As we can see, the different areas are effectively providing the resources to newcomers.

Job Experience – Parameter 2

Level of Agreement	My goals/tasks were clearly defined.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Disagree	1	5%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%	3.75	4
Somewhat Agree	10	50%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

In what concerns parameter 2, individuals are inclined to agree that their goals and tasks were clearly defined (mean = 3.75). Also, 50% or more of respondents answered to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 2, while 20% "Strongly Agree" with it.

Onboarding might be a useful practice to transmit the goals and main tasks for the newcomer. In this sense, we see that Company A is doing it with some effectiveness, but there are still room for improvement, since not all newcomers feel this way.

Job Experience – Parameter 3

Level of Agreement	I have a clear understanding of my career path and perspectives/possibilities.		Mean	Median
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency		
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	3.65	4
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	7	35%		
Strongly Agree	5	25%		

Overall, individuals lean towards agreement in what concerns their understanding on their career perspectives (mean = 3.65). We should highlight that 50% or more of respondents answered at maximum the option "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 3 (median = 4). Nonetheless, the more positive answers should be highlighted, therefore we can see that 25% "Strongly Agree" with parameter 3.

Overall, onboarding might reveal to be a good practice when it comes to present the newcomers' career possibilities. Not only because it might present the company as a whole, but also the different departments, areas and functions available. As we can see in the above table, the future onboarding can still play a major role in this parameter.

Job Experience – Parameter 4

Level of Agreement	I received additional training to perform my job successfully (internal systems, general operating practices, …).			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Disagree	3	15%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%	3.4	4
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	2	10%		

Globally, respondents tend to agree with parameter 4 (mean = 3.4). Moreover, 45% of respondents answered the option "Somewhat Agree" with this parameter. However, 15% of respondents "Somewhat Disagree" that they received additional training to perform their job successfully.

As we can see, when onboarding newcomers, their performance and employee experience might improve, if there would be an effective training and orientation.

Job Experience – Parameter 5

Level of Agreement	My supervisor provided me with regular feedback on my performance.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	15%	3.7	4
Somewhat Agree	10	50%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

In this case, individuals tend to agree that their supervisor provided them with regular feedback on their performance (mean = 3.7). In this parameter, 50% of respondents answered the option "Somewhat Agree" with it, while 20% "Strongly Agree".

When arriving to a new role, new hires want to achieve great performances and to impress their teams and managers. So, feedback is really important for them and it should be provided by

their managers. As we can see from parameter 5, the results are good, but can be improved. Besides, all areas of Company A should be aware of the importance of this parameter.

Job Experience – Parameter 6

Level of Agreement	The job description and recruitment process were consistent with what I am currently experiencing.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	3.9	4
Somewhat Disagree	1	5%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%		
Somewhat Agree	11	55%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

Overall, respondents tend to agree that the job description and recruitment process were consistent with what they were experiencing (mean = 3.9). Once again, at least 50% of respondents answered at maximum the option "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 6 (median = 4). It is important to highlight that 20% of respondents "Neither Agree Nor Disagree" that the job description and recruitment process were consistent with what they were experiencing. Inevitably, new employees create a first impression with the first impact that they have with the company, Company A in this case. Therefore, it is important to be consistent with the all process, from the recruitment phase, to the onboarding one. We also understand that it was not a consensual perception, so planning and coherency are important aspects to be taken into account in the future.

Job Experience – Parameter 7

Level of Agreement	I am proud to work for this company.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.3	4.5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%		
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	10	50%		

In global terms, respondents agree with the statement "I am proud to work for this company" (mean = 4.3). This was one of best rated parameters in this question. This can be explained by the reputation that Company A has in the market. Answers show that 50% of respondents "Strongly Agree" that they are proud to work for Company A and 30% "Somewhat Agree". So, as we can see, most newcomers present great proud to work for Company A.

Job Experience – Parameter 8

Level of Agreement	My manager was prepared for my arrival.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	2	10%	4.15	4.5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Agree	7	35%		
Strongly Agree	10	50%		

Overall, individuals agree that their manager was prepared for their arrival (mean = 4.15). Moreover, 50% "Strongly Agree" with this parameter and 35% "Somewhat Agree". It is important to ensure that everything and each stakeholder is prepared for any newcomer's arrival.

So, when onboarding new hires, it is crucial for managers to be prepared for them, which according to the results, most were. This allows newcomers to achieve more quickly their goals, to integrate faster into the role and to have a better employee experience.

Job Experience – Parameter 9

Level of Agreement	My manager checked in with me regularly to answer any questions or concerns.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	4.3	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	10%		
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	11	55%		

In general terms, respondents agree that their manager checked in with them regularly to answer any questions or concerns (mean = 4.3). In fact, 55% of the sample "Strongly Agree" with parameter 9 and 30% "Somewhat Agree". This is a crucial parameter in any onboarding, because everything is new for the new hire. So, it is important to ensure that the manager checks regularly on the newcomer, especially in the onboarding phase, which can be the most stressful one.

Job Experience – Parameter 10

Level of Agreement	I received helpful orientation to perform my job.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	2	10%	3.85	4.5
Somewhat Disagree	3	15%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Agree	4	20%		
Strongly Agree	10	50%		

Overall, respondents tend to agree with parameter 10 (mean = 3.85). We can observe that 50% of respondents "Strongly Agree" that the orientation received was useful to perform their job successfully and 20% "Somewhat Agree". However, 15% "Somewhat Disagree" with this parameter and it is important to increase these results.

During onboarding, it is crucial to provide orientation to newcomers, because they know little about the company's processes, practices and main tasks. So, it is precisely on the onboarding phase that this is done. As we can see from the table above, the results are very promising, but can be improved.

Job Experience – Parameter 11

Level of Agreement	I feel integrated into my team.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.25	5
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	10%		
Somewhat Agree	5	25%		
Strongly Agree	11	55%		

In this case, individuals agree that they feel integrated into their teams (mean = 4.25). Actually, 55% of them "Strongly Agree" that they feel integrated and 25% "Somewhat Agree". These newcomers will probably obtain better performances and have a better employee experience – onboarding is a crucial practice indeed, and results can be even better in the future.

Job Experience – Parameter 12

Level of Agreement	Overall, I am satisfied with my job experience so far.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	4	4
Somewhat Disagree	1	5%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	10%		
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	7	35%		

In the last parameter, respondents agree that they are overall satisfied with their job experience (mean = 4). In fact, 35% of respondents "Strongly Agree" that they are satisfied so far with their job experience and 45% "Somewhat Agree" with it.

In the light of this and comparing the results with the overall satisfaction with the onboarding process and the weeks following it, onboarding might have a greater impact in the beginning of the phase, rather than in the following weeks. However, an effective onboarding in the first few days is crucial for the whole job and employee experience.

Annex L – Descriptive Analysis: What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?

First Order: Concepts	Second Order: Categories	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?			
Tudo correu bem	Effective orientation	7	35%
Tudo correu de acordo com o esperado			
Face à minha experiência anterior, penso que as primeiras semanas na função foram adequadas			
Nada. Tive a sorte de trabalhar com pessoas impecáveis e sempre disponíveis			
Nada			
Estou satisfeita.			
Nada, tudo correu bem.			
Mais acompanhamento e conhecer as pessoas 'certas'	Need for training and orientation	4	20%
Mais acompanhamento. Mais proximidade com o trabalho dos membros da equipa.			
Dada a natureza do trabalho, muito pormenorizado e com grande margem de erro, penso que o apoio técnico deveria ter sido mais individualizado.			
Uma maior abrangência de formação sobre os diferentes tipos de projetos a decorrer na organização.			
mais volume de trabalho	More job responsibilities and clear tasks	3	15%
Terem me sido designadas mais tarefas			
Gestão de expectativas			
cartao de acesso disponibilizado mais cedo	More workplace preparation	2	10%
Maior flexibilidade/ facilidade / rapidez na instalação de Sotware			
Interação com outras áreas.	Need for socialization and feedback	4	20%
Uma maior proximidade e clareza por parte das chefias diretas.			
Podia ter havido mais e melhor comunicação com as outras áreas e podia-se ter gerido melhor o tempo.			
maior socialização com os colegas			

Annex M – Retention for Company A

Onboarding duration	Do you still see yourself working at this company in the future?	
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**
Yes, in the short-term.	5	25%
Yes, in the long-term.	14	70%
No	2	10%

Annex N – Likelihood to recommend Company A

Recommendation level	Considering your entire experience so far, how likely are you to recommend your organization as an employer?			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Extremely Unlikely	0	0%	4,15	4
Unlikely	1	5%		
Neither Unlikely nor Likely	2	10%		
Likely	10	50%		
Extremely Likely	7	35%		

Annex O – Work department

Area	In which department do you work in?	
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Business	8	40%
Support	12	60%

Annex P – Respondents' age groups

Age	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean
22	1	5%	24,25
23	7	35%	
24	4	20%	
25	4	20%	
26	3	15%	
28	1	5%	

Annex Q – Respondents' level of education

Level of Education (completed)	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Bachelor's Degree	15	75%
Master's Degree	5	25%
Doctorate's Degree	0	0%
Post-Graduation	0	0%

Annex R – Descriptive Analysis: Onboarding Experience

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 1

Level of Agreement	The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go.			
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Mean**	**Median**
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Disagree	3	15%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%	3.65	4
Somewhat Agree	10	50%		
Strongly Agree	3	15%		

According to parameter 1, that respects the statement "The information I received before my first day helped me know what to expect and where to go", most respondents tend to agree (mean = 3.65). 50% or more of the twenty respondents, selected at maximum the option "Somewhat Agree" (median = 4).

As we know, the first day of any employee can be stressful and an onboarding program should help reducing those anxieties. Additionally, it is a parameter that increased when compared with the respondents of the first survey, but it needs improvement in the future as well.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 2

Level of Agreement	I feel like I fit in the company culture.			
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Mean**	**Median**
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%	4.05	4
Somewhat Agree	11	55%		
Strongly Agree	5	25%		

Globally, respondents agree that they fit into the company's culture (mean = 4.05) and at least 55% of the respondents "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 2 (median = 4), while 25% "Strongly Agree" with it.

Therefore, onboarding plays an effective role in terms of transmitting the company's culture to the newcomers, integrating them into it, which contributes for a better employee experience and, hopefully, talent retention.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 3

Level of Agreement	I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand my job/tasks.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	3.85	4
Somewhat Disagree	1	5%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	10	50%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

Individuals tend to agree that their onboarding help them to better understand their tasks and role (mean = 3.85). Moreover, 50% or more of individuals answered to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 3 (median = 4) and 20% to "Strongly Agree".

Newcomers should have a clear understanding on what are their main tasks of the new job. Since day one, new hires want to impress and contribute as soon as possible for good results. So, as we can see, there are still some gaps in explaining clearly what are going to be the main tasks of the newcomer, but the results improved when comparing with the previous onboarding process.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 4

Level of Agreement	I feel that my onboarding process helped me to better understand the company as a whole.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.6	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	12	60%		

Overall, respondents agree that the onboarding process helped them to better understand the company as a whole (mean = 4.6). In fact, 60% of respondents "Strongly Agree" with this parameter and 40% "Somewhat Agree" with it.

It is important for newcomers not only to know and understand their new area and role, but also the company in a holistic perspective. In this sense, this pilot onboarding program proves to be an effective practice to transmit this information.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 5

Level of Agreement	In the onboarding process, I got to know where to go to get additional assistance on personnel matters, benefits, paperwork, etc.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.3	4
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	10%		
Somewhat Agree	10	50%		
Strongly Agree	8	40%		

Globally, individuals agree with parameter 5 (mean = 4.3). Furthermore, 50% of individuals answered to "Somewhat Agree" with this parameter and 40% to "Strongly Agree".

When newcomers first arrive to a company, they know few people, processes or even the benefits that they are entitled to, which may cause discomfort and concerns. Therefore, onboarding is an effective human resources' practice to deal with parameter 5, as we can see from the results obtained.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 6

Level of Agreement	I received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.35	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	3	15%		
Strongly Agree	12	60%		

In this case, the results were also very good, and individuals agree with parameter 6 (mean = 4.35). In fact, 60% of respondents "Strongly Agree" that they received helpful information, regarding Company's history, products and services.

In this sense, the message regarding Company A's mission, history and values seems to have been effectively transmitted with the pilot onboarding program, which facilitates the newcomer's integration into their team and into the company's culture.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 7

Level of Agreement	All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.5	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	11	55%		

In what regards parameter 7, the results were also very positive, and respondents agree with the statement "All the elements of my welcome kit were what I expected" (mean = 4.5). In fact, 55% of individuals answered to "Strongly Agree" with parameter 7 and 20% to "Somewhat Agree" with it.

The welcome kit is in fact an element that can increase the sense of belonging, the whole employee experience and can have a major visual and immediate impact on newcomers. So, the welcome kit for the pilot onboarding program was carefully planned and, as a result, newcomers reveal a great satisfaction with it.

Restructuration and implementation of an onboarding program

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 8

Level of Agreement	The onboarding process helped me feel welcomed.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.8	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Agree	4	20%		
Strongly Agree	16	80%		

Overall, respondents strongly agree with parameter 8 (mean = 4.8), in fact, 80% of them. Due to all the anxieties of the first days of newcomers, it is important to welcome and integrate them as soon as possible. As we can see, this pilot onboarding program proved to do it and it may reveal the importance of newcomers in meeting the different stakeholders of Company A.

Onboarding Experience – Parameter 9

Level of Agreement	I found the onboarding program interesting and interactive/dynamic.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.55	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Agree	7	35%		
Strongly Agree	12	60%		

Parameter 9 reveals a strong agreement with the statement "I found the onboarding program interesting and interactive/dynamic" (mean = 4.55). Actually, 60% of respondents selected the option "Strongly Agree" and 35% selected to "Somewhat Agree" with the parameter.

So, as previously said, it is important to onboard newcomers in an interesting and dynamic way, so that they feel motivated to work for Company A. Moreover, it will increase their employee experience and, consequently, their performance. Therefore, the results obtained by this pilot program are very promising in doing it so.

Level of Agreement	Overall, I am satisfied with the onboarding process.			
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Mean**	**Median**
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	0%	4.55	5
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	11	55%		

Finally, respondents agree that they were very satisfied with their onboarding program (mean = 4.55), since 55% selected the option "Strongly Agree" and 45% selected to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 10.

To sum up, this pilot onboarding program improved the abovementioned parameters when compared with the results obtained in the first survey and it is a crucial practice to invest in. Nevertheless, there are still some work to do in terms of pre-boarding and clarifying the future role of the newcomer.

Annex S – Onboarding duration

Onboarding duration	Should onboarding have been longer, shorter or was it just about right?	
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**
Longer	1	5%
Shorter	0	0%
Just about right	19	95%

Annex T – Likelihood to recommend Company A

Recommendation level	How likely are you to recommend your organization as an employer after your onboarding experience?			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Extremely Unlikely	0	0%		
Unlikely	0	0%		
Neither Unlikely nor Likely	1	5%	4,2	4
Likely	14	70%		
Extremely Likely	5	25%		

Annex U – Descriptive Analysis: Describe your onboarding process in one sentence.

Describe your onboarding process in one sentence.			
First Order: Concepts	**Second Order: Categories**	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
A comissão executiva foi a primeira a conhecer-me, o que não costuma acontecer mas deveria, e depois eu fui conhecer todos os departamentos.	Effective socialization	2	10%
Foi uma ótima forma de quebrar o gelo tanto com os outros colegas como com os colaboradores da empresa.			
Foi interativo e permitiu conhecer o Grupo Fidelidade, não apenas de uma perspetiva "teórica" e explicativa, mas também com uma vertente muito prática, tendo em conta que acompanhámos os profissionais no seu dia-a-dia.	Effective immersion into the Company's culture and business	6	30%
Processo dinâmico e inovador que me permitiu sentir integrado e familiarizado com a cultura da empresa.			
Sendo o onboarding o primeiro contacto real com a companhia, acredito que motivou bastante para querer ficar a trabalhar no local.			
Permitiu ter uma visão transversal da companhia e conectar com as diferentes áreas que contribuem p o seu funcionamento, fazendo aprendizagens e criando contactos			
Uma apresentação global da empresa de forma dinâmica e estruturada.			
Importante para conhecermos o negócio da empresa.			
Dinâmico, acolhedor e essencial para dar as bases necessárias para encarar o desafio profissional que se segue.	Welcoming and dynamic onboarding	12	60%
Enriquecedor			
O facto do mesmo ser muito dinâmico tornou-se cansativo por ser muita informação, mas no fim o importante é que me deixou preparado			
Dinâmico e acolhedor			
Duas semanas de integração.			
Desafiante e completo			
Dinâmico			
Boa preparação			
Benéfico			
Uma excelente primeira impressão!			
Uma oportunidade para começar com o pé direito.			
O meu onboarding serviu para me sentir acolhida e orientada na empresa.			

Annex V – Descriptive Analysis: What would have made your first days better?

What would have made your first days better?			
First Order: Concepts	**Second Order: Categories**	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Nenhuma, toda a experiência foi positiva.	Effective onboarding	10	50%
Nada a acrescentar.			
Acredito que o acolhimento foi no geral muito positivo.			
Não sei, foram ótimos			
Foi tudo ótimo			
Foi excelente			
Da experiência que tive, acho que foi um grande esforço por parte da Companhia			
Não sei… Todos dias aprendia coisas novas e interessantes			
Nada a acresentar. Foi excelente.			
De momento, não me ocorre nada.			
Se as pessoas que me receberam soubessem melhor o que é que eu iria fazer na empresa.	More preparation from the receiving area	2	10%
Melhor organização da área que nos recebe.			
Realizar mais actividades didáticas.	More disruptive and networking activities	4	20%
Penso que podíamos ter feito mais networking em almoços com pessoas da companhia de todas as áreas e de diferentes cargos hierárquicos.			
Palestras dinâmicas, mas poderiam algumas ter mais atividades práticas.			
Apesar de ter cumprido as expectativas, era interessante uma atividade "fora caixa".			
Explicando melhor como interagir e comunicar na Companhia	More clarification on communication and culture	2	10%
Transmitindo a ideia de que era um ambiente familiar.			
Melhor gestão de tempo em algumas palestras, que foram um bocado apressadas	Better preparation of activities	2	10%
Houve momentos em que para visitarmos tudo, alguns dias foram muito exaustivos			

Annex W – Descriptive Analysis: Job Experience

Job Experience – Parameter 1

Level of Agreement	I was given all the necessary resources to perform my job successfully (including hardware, software, stationery, guidelines, ...).			
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Mean**	**Median**
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	3.95	4
Somewhat Disagree	3	15%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	20%		
Somewhat Agree	4	20%		
Strongly Agree	9	45%		

Globally, respondents tend to agree that they received all the necessary resources to perform their job successfully (mean = 3.95). 20% of respondents selected the option to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 1 and 45% to "Strongly Agree" with it.

Onboarding should continue on the first weeks of work, so it is crucial to ensure that newcomers have the resources to perform their tasks successfully. As we can see, the different areas are effectively providing the resources to newcomers, but it is important to increase the results obtained. Newcomers feel anxious on the first weeks of work and want to deliver good results, so it is important for Company A to work on this area and align all managers and areas in terms of providing all the necessary resources to the new hires.

Job Experience – Parameter 2

Level of Agreement	My goals/tasks were clearly defined.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	6	30%	3.7	4
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	4	20%		

Regarding parameter 2, individuals tend to agree that their goals and tasks were clearly defined (mean = 3.7). Also, 50% or more of respondents answered to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 2, while 20% "Strongly Agree" with it.

In this sense, we see that Company A is doing it with some effectiveness, but this pilot onboarding program did not improve this parameter. The Human Resource department might play an important role in this parameter and define with the different areas a plan to explain to a new employee their main tasks and goals.

Job Experience – Parameter 3

Level of Agreement	I have a clear understanding of my career path and perspectives/possibilities.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%	3.65	4
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	7	35%		
Strongly Agree	5	25%		

Overall, individuals are inclined to agree in what concerns their understanding on their career perspectives (mean = 3.65). We should highlight that 50% or more of respondents answered at maximum the option "Somewhat Agree" (median = 4). Nonetheless, the more positive answers should be highlighted, therefore we can see that 25% "Strongly Agree" with parameter 3.

Onboarding might reveal to be a good practice when it comes to present the newcomers' career perspectives. But in this case, there have not been much changes in the opinions when compared to the previous onboarding. It is important for new hires to know as much areas and stakeholders as possible, but this should be complemented with a good understanding on their career perspectives, which can be done not only by newcomers' managers, but also by the Human Resources department, since it has an area dedicated entirely to talent management. Besides, Company A as a strong internal mobility policy and newcomers should be aware of it.

Job Experience – Parameter 4

Level of Agreement	I received additional training to perform my job successfully (internal systems, general operating practices, …).			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4	4
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	10	50%		
Strongly Agree	5	25%		

Globally, respondents agree with parameter 4 (mean = 4). Moreover, 50% of respondents answered the option "Somewhat Agree" and 25% to "Strongly Agree" that they received additional training.

The hiring managers were told to include additional training in terms of internal systems, general operating practices, among others, when receiving the newcomer. The aim was to integrate as soon as possible the new hire, so that he or she could successfully perform the new role. We can observe that the results obtained were positive in this parameter and that the onboarding process should continue on the job.

Job Experience – Parameter 5

Level of Agreement	My supervisor provided me with regular feedback on my performance.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	3.8	4
Somewhat Disagree	3	15%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	15%		
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	5	25%		

In parameter 5, we can observe that individuals tend to agree that their supervisor provided them with regular feedback on their performance (mean = 3.8). In this parameter, 45% of respondents answered the option to "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 5 and 25% to "Strongly Agree" with it.

When arriving to a new role, new hires want to achieve great performances and to impress their teams and managers. Therefore, feedback is really important for them and should be provided by their managers and sometimes by their colleagues. As we can see, the results are good and slightly increased when compared to the previous onboarding. However, it continues to be important to increase the level of agreement with this parameter, which is so important as literature showed us.

Job Experience – Parameter 6

Level of Agreement	The job description and recruitment process were consistent with what I am currently experiencing.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Disagree	2	10%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%	3.7	4
Somewhat Agree	14	70%		
Strongly Agree	2	10%		

Overall, newcomers tend to agree that the job description and recruitment process were consistent with what they were experiencing (mean = 3.7). In fact, 70% of the participants selected the option "Somewhat Agree" with parameter 6.

Pre-boarding is an important phase of the onboarding process, since it is one of the first impressions that potential newcomers make about Company A. Therefore, it is important to be consistent with the entire process, from the recruitment phase, to the onboarding one. From the table above, we understand that there is still some work to do, and an effective communication plan might be the key to increase the results.

Job Experience – Parameter 7

Level of Agreement	I am proud to work for this company.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	0%	4.55	5
Somewhat Agree	9	45%		
Strongly Agree	11	55%		

In global terms, most newcomers present great proud to work for Company A (mean = 4.55). This was one of the best rated parameters in this question and it can be explained, in this case, not only by the reputation of Company A in the sector, but also by the experience that the newcomers had and were having at the company. In terms of analysis, 55% of respondents "Strongly Agree" with parameter 7 and 45% "Somewhat Agree" with it.

Compared to the previous onboarding, this parameter slightly increased, which means that onboarding has an influence in terms of making newcomers proud for working at Company A, but its own reputation may speak louder.

Job Experience – Parameter 8

Level of Agreement	My manager was prepared for my arrival.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4	4
Somewhat Disagree	1	5%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5	25%		
Somewhat Agree	7	35%		
Strongly Agree	7	35%		

Overall, individuals agree that their manager was prepared for their arrival (mean = 4). Moreover, 35% "Strongly Agree" with this parameter and 35% "Somewhat Agree". It is important to ensure that everything and each stakeholder is prepared for any new employee.

This parameter slightly decreased compared to the previous onboarding. That might be justified by the additional focus given to the first two weeks of onboarding. However, after the intense onboarding agenda on the first two weeks, it is vital to ensure that managers are prepared for the arrival of the new employees. This allows newcomers not only to achieve more quickly their goals, but also to have a better employee experience and performance.

Job Experience – Parameter 9

Level of Agreement	My manager checked in with me regularly to answer any questions or concerns.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.4	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	15%		
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	11	55%		

Overall, respondents agree that their manager checked in with them regularly to answer any interrogations or worries (mean = 4.4). In fact, 55% of the sample "Strongly Agree" with parameter 9 and 30% "Somewhat Agree". This is a crucial aspect in any onboarding program, because everything is a novelty for the new employee, so it is important to ensure that the manager checks regularly with him or her in order to facilitate the integration into the new job. Therefore, this is an important component when onboarding new hires.

Job Experience – Parameter 10

Level of Agreement	I received helpful orientation to perform my job.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.3	4
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	15%		
Somewhat Agree	8	40%		
Strongly Agree	9	45%		

Overall, respondents tend to agree with parameter 10 (mean = 4.3). We can observe that 45% of respondents "Strongly Agree" that the orientation received was useful to perform their job successfully and 40% "Somewhat Agree" with it.

We conclude that during onboarding, it is crucial to provide guidance to newcomers, so that they feel integrated and perform their tasks successfully. As we can see, this pilot onboarding program and the previous manager's meetings, had an influence in increasing these results.

Job Experience – Parameter 11

Level of Agreement	I feel integrated into my team.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.5	5
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	10%		
Somewhat Agree	6	30%		
Strongly Agree	12	60%		

Globally, respondents strongly agree that they feel integrated into their teams (mean = 4.5). In fact, 60% of them "Strongly Agree" with it and 30% "Somewhat Agree". These newcomers will probably obtain better performances and have a better employee experience, due to the higher motivation to perform their tasks. So, onboarding once again proves to be useful in this matter.

Job Experience – Parameter 12

Level of Agreement	Overall, I am satisfied with my job experience so far.			
	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Mean	Median
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	4.25	4
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%		
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	5%		
Somewhat Agree	13	65%		
Strongly Agree	6	30%		

Overall, we can observe that respondents agree that they were satisfied with their job experience (mean = 4.25). Actually, 30% of respondents "Strongly Agree" with it and 65% "Somewhat Agree".

Additionally, and comparing the results with the overall satisfaction with the onboarding process and the weeks following it, onboarding might once again have a greater impact in the beginning of the phase, but it will influence the whole newcomers' experience. It is a vital practice for any organization and with big impact for newcomers.

Annex X – Descriptive Analysis: What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?

What could have gone better in the weeks leading up to your new job?			
First Order: Concepts	**Second Order: Categories**	**Absolute Frequency**	**Relative Frequency**
Nada	Effective orientation	7	35%
Nada			
Não me ocorre nada			
A integração na função foi muito boa			
Eu tive um onboarding dentro da área para que ia, o que me fez conhecer melhor a área e preparar penso que nada poderia ter corrido melhor.			
Estava tudo de acrodo com as expectativas			
Nada. A área estava preparada para me receber			
Mais acompanhamento por parte de toda a equipa em vez de apenas um elemento e o supervisor.	Need for better organized and more diverse tasks	6	30%
Mais interação na equipa			
Uma melhor comunicação e organização do estágio, pois o departamento poderia estar melhor preparado para a receção			
Mais tarefas			
Mais diversidade de tarefas			
Poderia ter existido uma melhor organização das tarefas atribuídas.			
Acessos a determinados softwares.	Need for internal software access	4	20%
Mais acessos			
Ter os acessos logo disponíveis			
Mais eficácia na disponibilização dos acessos			
Uma formação mais abrangente, de acordo com as tarefas que me atribuiram.	Need for training	3	15%
Melhor articulação entre a teoria e a prática.			
Uma maior sensibilização para a importância da intranet (atualizar o perfil, onde procurar determinadas temáticas, etc).			

Annex Y – Retention for Company A

Onboarding duration	Do you still see yourself working at this company in the future?	
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**
Yes, in the short-term.	4	20%
Yes, in the long-term.	15	75%
No	1	5%

Annex Z – Likelihood to recommend Company A

Recommendation level	Considering your entire experience so far, how likely are you to recommend your organization as an employer?			
	Absolute Frequency	**Relative Frequency**	**Mean**	**Median**
Extremely Unlikely	0	0%	4,3	4
Unlikely	0	0%		
Neither Unlikely nor Likely	0	0%		
Likely	14	70%		
Extremely Likely	6	30%		