Our recommendations about on-boarding

This survey presents some of our key findings from the on-boarding research. We would like to get your feedback on these findings. This survey is anonymous.

This survey is composed of 6 sections with 12 likert questions and some optional verbatim questions. It approximately takes 15 minutes.

Section 1 has two background questions.

Section 2 presents three strategies for choosing tasks to on-board new members that we have summarized from interviews. We would like to know if your strategy is aligned with one of them.

Each of the following four sections provides some practices to address one aspect of on-boarding. We would like to know if you believe each presented practice would improve your team's on-boarding experience. There are also two optional questions in each section for you to share thoughts.

Section 1. Background

Blinded for review.

Section 2. Strategies

We have summarized our three strategies from interviews. In this section, we would like to know if the three strategies are representative.

1. Which of the following statement best describes your strategy of assigning tasks in the first few months to a new member who is (Choices are: Assign some simple tasks first and then improve complexity over time; Always assign the top one in the backlog; Let the new member to explore with a loosely defined task; None of these)
- a junior developer (adapted for review)
- a senior developer (adapted for review)

2. Can you explain your choice above? If you select "None of these", can you describe your strategy briefly?

Section 3. Learning

Learning is a primary objective of on-boarding. As working on the tasks, new members gain knowledge about the project's landscape, such as the team's missions and goals, the product and code, the customers, and the team's development process and tools.

3. Do you believe that the following practices that could facilitate learning would improve a new member's on-boarding experience in your team? (Choices are: Very unlikely; Somewhat unlikely; Neither likely nor unlikely; Somewhat likely; Very likely; Already in practice)
- Create and/or maintain a new member-friendly documentation.
- Include new members in most business and technical meetings.
- Run on-boarding sessions in the first few days to explain the big picture to the new member.

4. (Optional) Can you provide some explanations about your choices above? Please let us know if your choice differs for more senior developers.

5. (Optional) Do you have suggestions to accelerate learning for new members?

Section 4. Confidence
Managers generally want new members to eventually contribute independently to the team, which means that building up a new member's confidence is an important component of on-boarding.

6. Do you believe that the following practices that could build up confidence would improve a new member's on-boarding experience in your team? (Choices are: Very unlikely; Somewhat unlikely; Neither likely nor unlikely; Somewhat likely; Very likely; Already in practice)
- Use a sequence of quick (proper to the new member's seniority) tasks for new members to on-board.
- Set frequent checkpoints to give continuous positive confirmation to the new member.
- Set up dedicated learning time/sessions for new members.
- Make sure the new member clearly understand the specifications of the task.

7.(Optional) Can you provide some explanations about your choices above? Please let us know if your choice differs for more senior developers.

8.(Optional) Do you have any suggestions to build up confidence for new members?

Section 5. Social connections
On-boarding to a team naturally includes building social connections with the team's members. A new member interacts with the team socially but also professionally as they work towards the team's goals.

9. Do you believe that the following practices that could build social connections would improve a new member's on-boarding experience in your team? (Choices are: Very unlikely; Somewhat unlikely; Neither likely nor unlikely; Somewhat likely; Very likely; Already in practice)

- Set up frequent one-on-one meetings with a new member in the first few weeks.
- Use social events to create a safe environment for the new member.
- Assign tasks that require the new member to work with different people from the team.

10. (Optional) Can you provide some explanations about your choices above? Please let us know if your choice differs for more senior developers.

11. (Optional) Do you have any suggestions to build up social connections for new members?

Section 6. Mentors

Using mentors or on-boarding buddies is generally recognized as a good practice for on-boarding new members. A mentor's responsibilities range from getting the new member oriented on day one and setting up environments, to answering questions and assigning tasks to new members.

12. Do you have any suggestions to use mentors to help on-board new members?