

**United Bank Limited- Process Improvement of Employees’
Onboarding Journey
(Business Project-2)**



By

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(2019-EMBA-318094)

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Islamabad, Pakistan

(2024)

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A Business Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Executive Masters in Business Administration

In

NUST Business School (NBS)

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

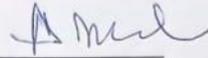
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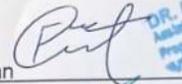
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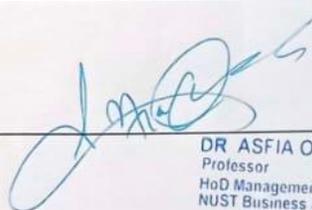
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I Maryam Afzal hereby state that my EMBA Business Project titled “United Bank Limited- Process Improvement of Employees’ Onboarding Journey” is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad or anywhere else in the country/ world.

At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after I graduate, the university has the right to withdraw my EMBA degree.

Name of Student: Maryam Afzal

Date: 28-May-24

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and give my warmest thanks to my supervisor Mr. Mommin Durrani who made this work possible and whose valuable feedback and insightful contributions along with constant guidance helped in successfully completing this project.

I would also like to give special thanks to my mother and my husband for their continuous support and understanding when writing my project.

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ABSTRACT

This project presents a structured approach to identify areas of improvement in the existing employee onboarding process of UBL through a thorough analysis of the existing process using various techniques aiming to propose an improved onboarding process that is efficient, tailored, structured and ensures integration. The project begins with a brief introduction to UBL's background followed by a detailed critique of the existing employee onboarding process. The critique led to the identification of two main issues in the existing process i.e., Lack of focus on employee integration and high processing time of the overall process. An in-depth analysis of each of the issues was performed using various techniques including process mapping, value added analysis, SWOT analysis and waste analysis which helped in determining the non-value-added and time-consuming steps and formed the base for suggesting an improved onboarding process for UBL. Based on the analysis, the onboarding process was re-designed with elimination of redundant steps, digitization of data and document collection, automation, tracking and visibility of the process from end to end. Moreover, steps to ensure employee integration were included in the process as well by extending the existing onboarding process beyond the joining day of employee to include a detailed orientation session followed by role specific trainings, team integration activities and implementation of feedback mechanisms. The redesigned process not only improved the overall cycle time of the entire onboarding process from 39 days to 13 days, but also ensured integration of employee into the organization leading to creation of a more inclusive, collaborative, and engaging onboarding experience, fostering a strong

sense of connection and integration among new employees from the outset of their journey with the organization.

Keywords: Onboarding, process improvement, employee integration, process redesign, problem analysis.

1. SCOPE OF PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to delve into analysis of the existing employee onboarding journey of United Bank Limited (UBL), analyze its strengths and weaknesses, identify waste & non-value adding steps and propose an improved onboarding process that is efficient, tailored, structured, and ensures integration. UBL's vision to be a world class bank dedicated to surpass the highest expectations of customers and all other stakeholders can be achieved only if the ones delivering the customer service i.e. employees are well integrated into the organization.

All the steps of the employee onboarding journey would be considered for this project starting from pre-boarding to the first month of the employee in the organization. The focus of this project is to rethink every step, eliminate activities that are unnecessary and suggest a better process leading to elimination of inefficient processes, obsolete practices and lengthy review and approval cycles.

2. COMPANY BACKGROUND

UBL was founded in 1959 with its first branch in Karachi and continued to expand its horizon locally and internationally to 4 continents in the years ahead. Innovation has always been one of the core values of UBL. It was the first bank to introduce computer banking in Pakistan in the year 1971. It was the pioneer of credit cards in Pakistan in 70's and left its mark by launching the Pak Rupees traveler cheques in 1971. In the 1990's the government of Pakistan decided to change the face of banking by creating a blueprint to privatize UBL. Thus, the government privatized the bank in the year 2002 through the collaboration of Bestway and Al Ayaan. It is a subsidiary of Bestway (Holdings) Limited which is incorporated in the United Kingdom.

UBL has been recognized as one of Pakistan most progressive and innovative banks, with a brilliant line-up of domestic and international recognitions and awards. In 2023, UBL was awarded 'Best Bank for ESG in Pakistan' by Asiamoney, having also been awarded 'Best Bank for Digital Solutions' by Asiamoney in 2022 for three consecutive years. Furthermore, UBL has been recognized at the Pakistan Banking Awards as the Best Bank of Pakistan (in 2016) along with other major accolades across the years.

3. UBL'S EXISTING EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING PROCESS

UBL's employee onboarding process currently in practice is a cumbersome process spanning across 39.5 days assuming a day to constitute of 8 hours. The process starts with decision of the Hiring Manager regarding finalization of the candidate and ends with providing the candidate tech support and completion of the candidate/ employee's records in the database while going through multiple departments in between including HR, IT, Finance, Telecom support and CXO ("X" here is a placeholder for any relevant chief level executive i.e., CHRO for HR employees, CMO for Product Development employees etc.). Detailed process flow of the current onboarding process is attached as annexure D.

4. CRITIQUE ON THE EXISTING EMPLOYEE

ONBOARDING PROCESS

UBL is one of the top 5 banks in Pakistan known for its exceptional customer services. However, providing high quality customer services requires well trained service providers i.e., the bank's employees who are fully integrated in the organization and have command over their work. Nonetheless, the bank has been facing issues in onboarding desired candidates mainly because of the high processing time of its employee onboarding process. The delays in processing time were due to a variety of factors including manual processes, disordered procedural sequence and restrictive policies. These factors are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

Despite marketing itself as a 'digital' bank, the existing employee onboarding process of UBL involves a lot of manual steps which increase the overall processing time of the onboarding process. One of such steps is the requirement of physical documents i.e., contract and joining pack. Even though the contract is emailed to the candidate, the candidate needs to physically submit the contract at a regional office as per UBL's policy. After receipt of contract, the joining pack is printed and couriered to the candidate and candidate is required to fill and physically submit it at the office on the day of their joining. Majority of the companies that are operating at this scale have developed online portals, company websites and digital channels for submitting, editing, updating and reviewing candidate information and documents. In this scenario, the employee's joining pack could easily be shared with them weeks before their first day facilitating early ID creation, email creation and laptop processing. On a similar note, the current process relies on manual back and forth within the company as well, with very little synchrony between departments and even teams within the same department. For instance, the flow of documents for obtaining approvals from CXO at various levels is done manually and consumes a lot of time.

Another factor adversely impacting the processing time of onboarding process is the disordered procedural sequence of the steps involved. For example, documents and details are requested twice from the candidate i.e., once by the hiring manager and then by HR.

This is redundancy and replication of steps and consumes excessive amount of time in the initial phase of the process leading to an increase in waiting time. Similarly, the process of conducting interviews of the candidate is also not synchronized. Currently, the hiring manager, HOD and the human resources department are separately conducting the candidate's interviews instead of conducting one panel interview to save the company and candidate's time, resources and efforts. The hiring manager basically has to sit through 2 interviews i.e., once at the time of initial screening of the candidate and the other during the HR's interview that could have been 1 joint interview with HR. This process takes up additional time of the candidate as well as the hiring manager. Moreover, the mandatory step of conducting background checks is done after obtaining approval of CXO on hiring of the candidate. This, in some cases, can turn out to be a waste of the company's resources in case of any negative element identified in background check. Instead, a logical approach would be to have background checks and verifications built into the final shortlisting step so that the candidate is not given company time and resources through further interviews and processing until they have been cleared of major background check flags and until their documentation is found to be authentic.

The approval of CXO mentioned above is also a redundant process as such approvals are sought even for minor things like interview assessment reviews and pay scale finalization as required under UBL's policies. Due to centralized decision making and busy schedule of CXO, such reviews/ approvals are usually delayed thereby increasing the waste in the onboarding process. Another example of UBL's restrictive policies causing delays in processing time is the procedure in place for medical checkups. Medical checkups are a mandatory requirement after finalization of the candidate in the middle of the onboarding process. These medical checkups can only be performed at designated labs' branches in metropolitan cities of Pakistan. Due to this restriction, people coming from remote areas require time and resources to reach these labs and get themselves tested which adds to the cycle time of the entire onboarding process.

Thus, the factors mentioned above increase the cycle time of the onboarding process manifold and lead to another major issue i.e., lack of employee integration. There are long spans of zero communication between the candidate and the organization which creates

confusion for the candidates regarding their selection. Such delays can lead to disengaged employees which can even lead to loss of potential suitable candidates. Those employees who decide to join the organization face further hurdles as the onboarding process stops right on the first day of the newly hired employee. The existing onboarding process ends with the provision of office supplies, laptop, ID and company pass. However, this does not ensure integration of the employee into the organization.

The current onboarding process exhibits several shortcomings that collectively impact the overall integration and success of new employees. One major deficiency lies in the absence of a comprehensive orientation to the company's culture, leaving new hires struggling to grasp the organization's values, mission, and vision. This lack of foundational understanding hampers their ability to align their work with broader objectives. Furthermore, the onboarding process fails to prioritize opportunities for new employees to interact with their future colleagues, resulting in a dearth of early integration and potentially fostering feelings of isolation. The results extend beyond individual experiences, affecting overall team dynamics, communication, and collaboration, thereby potentially undermining productivity, and job satisfaction.

Adding to the challenge is the absence of a clear overview of new employees' specific roles and responsibilities. This gap leads to confusion and inefficiencies in the initial stages of employment, with employees potentially struggling to adapt to their roles, ultimately diminishing job satisfaction and contributing to performance issues. Additionally, the onboarding program lacks structured socialization opportunities, such as team-building activities or events, denying new employees a platform to establish informal connections with their peers. Social integration is pivotal for fostering a sense of belonging, and the current deficiency may contribute to a less cohesive and collaborative work environment.

Communication during onboarding is another critical area of concern. The lack of effective channels for new employees to access information, ask questions, or seek guidance from supervisors or HR creates a communication gap. This gap leads to frustration, increased uncertainty, and a slower adaptation to the work environment. The onboarding process also falls short in actively seeking feedback from new employees,

missing valuable insights into their experiences and potential areas for improvement. Without feedback mechanisms, addressing issues promptly becomes challenging, impeding the continuous improvement of the onboarding program. In summary, the identified deficiencies collectively underscore the need for a comprehensive overhaul of the current onboarding process to ensure a more seamless and effective integration of new employees into the company culture and workflow.

5. ISSUES AND IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

As per the analysis given above, two main issues were identified in the existing employee onboarding process at UBL i.e., lack of focus on employee integration and high processing time. Solutions to address these two issues are discussed in detail in the following sections.

1.1 Issue #1: Lack of Focus on Employee Integration

5.1.1 Issue Analysis

The existing employee onboarding process ends with provision of office supplies, laptop and id creation. Moreover, first half of the day is usually spent completing the pending documentation formalities. Ending the onboarding process at this stage creates confusion and frustration for the employee as it raises concerns about cultural alignment, collaboration, role clarity, socialization, communication, and feedback mechanisms.

Lack of orientation, training and unavailability of a mentor/ go-to person creates frustration for the employee and makes the transition into the new organization harder for them. This in turn delays their understanding of job roles, company culture and expectations of seniors which hampers the employee's productivity. The result of such an onboarding process is a disengaged and non-productive employee who is not an ideal product of such an extensive hiring routine. Moreover, such an employee may eventually switch to other organizations for a better experience thereby increasing the cost of the company. Even if they decide to stay, the new hires require greater amount of time to settle down in their jobs, get to know the organization, obtain clarity on their job objectives, and forge a good relationship with other employees. All these might not be achieved efficiently in case of a poorly structured onboarding process.

In order to get a better understanding of the importance of employee integration, exit interviews of employees who resigned prior to completion of probation period with the organization were discussed with the HR representative. The discussion revealed that

some of the employees did not choose to join the organization because of lack of clarity regarding their hiring progress. While majority of those who resigned prior to completing their probation period had already applied to other organizations assuming they did not pass the interview rounds during the time they received no response from UBL. As per the Company's representatives, one in every five new hires have either declined to join the organization due to availability of another opportunity during the waiting time or have left before completion of probation period due to lack of support in the initial days.

5.1.2 Solution Suggested

To improve employee experience and ensure productivity and retention of employees via an effective employee onboarding process, the existing process should be expanded beyond provision of IT support to employees. The HR staff should ensure to provide maximum support to the new hires at least till the end of their first month at the organization. This can be done in phases as discussed in the following paragraphs.

On the day of joining, there is generally a lot of confusion among the new employees regarding the company's culture, hierarchy, the department's expectations etc. This is the time when they require support to feel welcomed and comfortable. In order to extend this support, HR can ensure that office supplies and documentation are ready for the day and a mentor is pre-assigned for the employee's introductory phase. Introductions to the team should be made on the first day of the new employee. Moreover, this is a good time to conduct an office tour and enable the employees to familiarize themselves with key areas and facilities. The next key step involves the establishment of a structured orientation program aimed at providing new employees with a profound understanding of the company's culture, values, mission, and vision. This can be achieved through engaging orientation sessions led by seniors, incorporating presentations and interactive activities to familiarize the employee with the organizational culture. Building on this, team integration activities can be designed to foster early connections among new employees and their colleagues. These activities, including team lunches, ice-breaking sessions, and collaborative projects, aim to create a conducive environment for social interactions and establish a sense of belonging within the teams. Also, a calendar of socialization events,

such as after-work gatherings, and cross-functional team-building activities, can be implemented to provide employees with numerous opportunities to connect outside the formal work setting. Moreover, to ensure a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, role-specific training tailored to the relevant department should be conducted. Many roles require technical training provision of which can make a huge difference in the employee's performance. For example, employees working in the State Bank Reporting department of the bank need to have intermediate to advanced level excel worksheet skills. Other than excel, they also require training on operating state bank portals and a thorough understanding of state bank's policies to ensure accurate reporting of financial figures. Moreover, in-depth training on the in-house software of UBL called Flexcube for extracting data and reports is required to perform this role efficiently.

All these efforts require effective communication channels to facilitate easy access to information, support, and guidance throughout the onboarding process. Digital platforms, such as intranet portals or communication apps, can serve as centralized hubs for information.

It is important to implement feedback mechanisms to improve the ongoing onboarding process so that employee experience can be enhanced. Regular surveys and feedback sessions should be conducted to gather insights from new employees into their onboarding experiences. This feedback can be used to make timely adjustments, address emerging issues, and enhance the overall onboarding process. For example, if the employee feels the need for additional training, it can be addressed earlier on thereby increasing employee satisfaction and productivity. In addition to employee feedback, feedback of immediate line managers should be obtained as well to gauge employee's progress, identify their strengths & weaknesses and the extent of their social and professional integration. This feedback can help in determining the employee's career path including assignment of suitable roles as per the employee's skillset. After necessary adjustments are made as per feedback, the onboarding process would be completed which is usually one month from the date of joining. A sample timeline for the steps to be added to the existing employee onboarding process for ensuring employee integration is attached as Annexure E.

Through these holistic enhancements, UBL can create a more inclusive, collaborative, and engaging onboarding experience, fostering a strong sense of connection and integration among new employees from the outset of their journey with the organization.

1.2 Issue #2: High Processing Time of the Onboarding Process

5.2.1 Issue Analysis

The existing employee onboarding process of UBL starting from finalization of employee to provision of necessary equipment has a high processing time of 39 days. This is due to multiple factors discussed earlier which included manual processes like requirement of physical documents (joining pack and contract) submission from candidate, lengthy approval cycles and restrictive policies such as obtaining CXO approvals for minor things and the practice of accepting medical reports from designated labs in metropolitan cities. Such delays can cause multiple negative consequences for both, the employee, and the organization. These can include high turnover, decreased productivity and increased costs.

To identify the areas of improvement, process mapping was performed as attached in appendix D. This helped in getting a clear picture of the improvement opportunities in and after each step/ task. As per the analysis performed based on data provided by the organization, the total cycle time for onboarding was 39 days of which processing time was 4 days.

Building upon the above data, a Value-Added Analysis on UBL's employee onboarding journey was performed with a view to identify unnecessary steps in the existing process leading to their elimination. In this analysis, we consider our 'customer' to be the finalized candidate and segregate the steps of the process into value added, non-value added and business value added steps as detailed in Annexure A. The analysis revealed that out of the total tasks/ steps, 10 tasks were value adding, 24 processes were important for Business value addition while 10 processes were non-value adding. The non-value

adding steps derived through this analysis need to be eliminated whereas the business value added steps need to be minimized in order to achieve better efficiency.

Furthermore, another analysis was performed to ascertain that all the wastes in the process are adequately identified. This was done through conducting a Waste Analysis. Contrary to the value-added analysis where value adding steps are identified first and then the remaining steps are classified into BVA & NVA, waste analysis takes the negative angle. Using the waste analysis, we try to find wastes everywhere i.e., related to specific steps in the whole process or between the process. Making the 8 wastes of lean methodology as the benchmark, the 8 wastes namely transportation, inventory, motion, waiting, over production, over processing and defects have been categorized into three groups i.e., Move, Hold and Overdo as described in Annexure F. The waste analysis of UBL's onboarding process has been done based on these categories as discussed in the following paragraphs.

The Move category involves wastes that are related to movement and includes the two types of wastes mentioned above i.e., transportation and motion. There are various steps involved in the existing onboarding process that add to the cycle time due to unnecessary movement. For example, initial set of documents are requested twice from the candidate i.e., once by hiring manager and the other by HR. This leads to movement of the same set of documents twice in the process thereby adding to the cycle time. Moreover, the candidates need to travel for interviews to the office of employment (hiring manager interview) and the regional office (for HR interview) which wastes time even further. Furthermore, transfer of the final physical record to the head office is also a redundant step that wastes more time during movement.

The next category is named as Hold and encompasses wastes arising from holding something. Two wastes have been included in this category i.e., inventory and waiting. Creation of logs independently at each department adds to their respective inventories which is additional waste as the same can be done at a centralized place. Moreover, the entire process comes to a halt at three areas i.e., during financial assessment (as it is a time-consuming process to define a range based on market dynamics), during assigning laptop

(as the process of assigning laptop starts at a later stage) and during CXO approvals (due to their busy schedule). This significantly adds to the waiting time of the entire process.

The last category is Overdo which includes wastes arising from doing more than is necessary to deliver value. The onboarding process involves multiple referrals to CXO for approvals along with multi-layer interviews instead of a single panel interview which duplicates work for departments and results in wastage of time and resources.

5.2.2 Solution Suggested

Conducting the value-added analysis (Annexure A) enabled us to identify the non-value adding steps in the existing employee onboarding process of UBL which was further supported by the waste analysis performed later. In order to lower the cycle time of 39 days, these non-value added steps need to be removed/ minimized whereas the cycle time related to value added and business value added steps need to be reduced.

One of the measures that can be adopted to achieve this goal is automation. A part of the process should be automated through introduction of an employee onboarding software. The software would be able to save time on multiple steps including background checks, candidate profile creation and CXO approvals. The background checks can be initiated through connected databases like NADRA verisys, UNSC/ NAB sanctioned lists, credit history etc. This way, red flags in the background check can be identified at the earliest possible stage for a cost that is nominal compared to the cost of a failed/wasted recruitment round. Moreover, document submission and profile creation can be done on the portal which will be accessible by both hiring manager and HR. In this manner, duplicate set of documents would not be required from the candidate separately by HR and hiring manager thereby reducing the time consumed on these repetitive steps. Document verification can start at this stage and movement of physical documents would minimize. Furthermore, CXO approvals (where applicable) can be done on this portal as well. This would leave a clear trail of accountability and keep the sequence of events, progress and the path going forward clear and visible. Once approvals are flagged, the process should automatically proceed to the next step and alert the relevant resources to begin their part.

For example, the portal can automatically forward Employee ID and Email creation flags to the IT team as soon as all pre-requisite information is available. Utilizing a dedicated portal would also minimize the physical movement of documents as the whole set of documents can be made available to the head office on portal thereby eliminating the waiting time required during physical transport of documents. The physical movement of documents can also be curtailed by downloading the joining pack right from the portal and emailing them to the candidate instead of sending joining pack via courier. Furthermore, the requirement of physically submitting the accepted offer letter at the head office can be eliminated with the introduction of acceptability of digital signatures.

Another step that can be taken to minimize the non-value-added steps is to remove unnecessary steps in the onboarding process like seeking CXO approval for every other task. Approval should be sought from CXO only for finalization of the candidate whereas the remaining decision making should be done by the respective department heads. However, the approval process flows are approved by the board of UBL and implementing such a change would require changes in the core policies of UBL. Another redundant step is conducting multiple separate interviews of the candidate. The candidate first gives an interview to the hiring manager, then to the departmental head and then to HR. Instead, one panel interview should be conducted in the presence of all the relevant personnel to save the company's and candidate's time, resources and efforts. Similarly, the policy of medical checkups also carries unnecessary steps that increase the waiting time in the onboarding process. As per UBL's policy, only those medical reports are acceptable which are issued by designated labs' branches in metropolitan cities of Pakistan. This causes inconvenience for the candidates coming from remote areas as they must travel to the nearest big city to complete the medical requirement. Instead of restricting medical checkups to specific branches in limited cities, the bank should expand the labs on its panel to accommodate maximum cities. This would shorten the overall cycle time of the whole process.

Keeping in view the above, a SWOT analysis (Annexure C) was conducted on the existing employee onboarding process based on which a revised onboarding process is designed for UBL as attached in Annexure B while building on the strengths of the existing

process and exploiting the opportunities available for improvement. At this stage, processing time, cycle time and cycle time efficiency associated with each task/ step was determined based on the data provided by the HR team as attached in Annexure B.

It is evident from the Annexure B that most of the tasks having low cycle time efficiency are either NVA or those BVA tasks that are essential for the business but have high cycle times like addition of interview assessment details by HR, involvement of CXO at multiple stages, record filing etc. The onboarding process was revised in a manner that 27% of the tasks were eliminated which included 60%, 25% and 27% of the NVA, VA and BVA steps respectively. On the other hand, 4 steps were added to the process in order to ensure employee integration after their first day of joining. These changes are reflected in the table given below:

Table 5.1 Changes in the Existing Process

Sr. No.	Tasks/ Processes of Existing Employee Onboarding Process	Performer	VA/ BVA/ NVA	Action Taken
1	Send Final Candidate to HR	Hiring Manager	BVA	To be done through portal
2	Request Documents and Details from Applicant	Hiring Manager	NVA	Step removed
3	Candidate Emails all Documents to Hiring Manager	Candidate	BVA	Step removed
4	Request documents and details from applicant	HR	BVA	No change
5	Candidate emails all documents to HR	Candidate	BVA	No change
6	HR forwards case for CXO approval	HR	BVA	To be done through portal
7	HR creates staff requisition on HR portal	HR	BVA	No change

8	Communicates in-principal nod to HR	CXO	NVA	Step removed
9	HR nominates interviewer	HR	BVA	No change
10	Background check initiated	HR	BVA	Step Modified: Upload documents on portal and initiate background check
11	Schedule HR interview	HR	VA	No change
12	Communicate interview date	HR	VA	No change
13	Candidate gives HR interview	Candidate	BVA	Step Modified: Panel interview instead of HR interview
14	Hiring manager prepares interview assessment	Hiring Manager	BVA	To be done through portal
15	HR adds details to the interview assessment	HR	BVA	To be done through portal
16	Reviews Candidate Interview Assessment	CXO	NVA	Step removed
17	checks market internal pay scales	Finance	BVA	No change
18	communicates ideal range to CXO	Finance	NVA	Step Modified: Range communicated to HR instead
19	CXO reviews and sets offer bounds	CXO	BVA	Step removed
20	Communicates bounds to HR	CXO	NVA	Step removed
21	Makes offer to candidate	HR	VA	Step Modified: evaluate remuneration package and make offer to candidate

22	Candidate sends acceptance of offer	Candidate	VA	No change
23	HR prepares offer pack	HR	BVA	No change
24	Enters Candidate Profile into System	IT Support	BVA	Step removed
25	CXO Approval Is Requested	IT Support	NVA	Step removed
26	CXO Approves Final Package	CXO	BVA	Step removed
27	Profile is initiated for medical formalities	IT Support	BVA	Step removed
28	HR Schedules medical check	HR	NVA	No change
29	Candidate undergoes medical checkup	Candidate	VA	No change
30	Internal medical officer reviews results	HR	BVA	No change
31	medical officer processes online application	HR	BVA	No change
32	HR issues appointment letter	HR	VA	Step removed
33	Signs contract at regional Head Office	Candidate	VA	Step removed
34	enters executed contract in database	HR	BVA	Step removed
35	ships hard copy to HQ for safe keeping	HR	NVA	Step removed
36	Prepares Joining pack	HR	BVA	To be extracted through portal
37	Courier joining pack to candidate	HR	NVA	Step Modified: Email joining pack to candidate
38	Employee fills joining forms	Employee	BVA	Step removed

39	Employee submits joining pack on the date of joining & Initiates Bank Account	Employee	BVA	Step Modified: Employee completes and emails appointment letter and joining pack
40	record is filed	HR	BVA	Step Modified: Upload documents on portal
41	Employee ID is created	IT Support	VA	Step Modified: Employee ID is created and technical access is made available
42	Laptop & IP Phone request is initiated by IT Support	IT Support	NVA	Step removed
43	allocates Laptop & IP Phone	IT Support	VA	No change
44	onboarding completion is notified	HR	VA	No change

Incorporating the above-mentioned changes resulted in reduction of cycle time from 39 days to 13 days. Main contributor in this was the reduction in time previously consumed on manual processes, redundant steps and involvement of CXO in every step which has now been substituted by introduction of an employee onboarding software, allocating approving powers to respective HODs and adding meaningful steps required to ensure employee integration in the new onboarding process. Step wise cycle times are reflected in Annexure B.

6. CONCLUSION

UBL is long overdue for a redesign of its entire onboarding process; a process that is so lengthy, time consuming and disconnected from the candidate that several confirmed candidates have assumed they did not pass some check or verification or were rejected and therefore accepted alternative job offers. Analysis revealed two main issues with the existing employee onboarding process i.e., lack of employee integration and high processing time of the overall process.

In order to improve the existing employee onboarding process of UBL, the technique of process mapping was employed which helped in identifying improvement opportunities. The findings were further strengthened with the use of Value Added Analysis and Waste Analysis that highlighted the redundant and repetitive steps in the process such as repeated document collection, manual processes, double interviews and multiple CXO approvals. The results revealed that the existing employee onboarding process had cycle time of 39 days which in most cases led to reduced productivity, confusion regarding company culture, weak understanding of role expectations and in some cases, waste of UBL's time and resources when the candidate refuses to join the organization.

Keeping in view the above, the onboarding process was re-designed with elimination of redundant steps, digitization of data and document collection, automation, tracking and visibility of the process from end to end including flagging the next lane in the process for the next activity, scheduling necessary sessions based on mutual calendar availability, forwarding automated emails and messages, issuing reminders, creating alerts for delays, and flagging automated background or medical report data that classifies as failure to qualify. Moreover, steps to ensure employee integration were included in the process as well in the form of introductions, orientation and training. The redesigned process led to a reduction in cycle time from 39 days to 13 days which is a remarkable improvement capable of addressing concerns of candidates and ensuring optimal utilization of resources.

7. ANNEXURES

A.1 Annexure A- Value Added Analysis

Value-added analysis is a technique to identify unnecessary steps in a process in view of eliminating them. For performing this analysis on UBL’s employee onboarding journey, ‘customer’ would be the finalized candidate and the steps of the process will be segregated into the following categories:

Value Added (VA): Steps that directly contribute to positive outcomes are called Value Adding steps.

Business Value Added (BVA): BVA steps are those that the customer is neither willing to pay for, nor gains satisfaction from (so they are not value adding), but they are necessary or useful to the company where the process is performed.

Non-Value Added (NVA): Steps that are neither VA nor BVA are called Non-Value Adding.

Value added analysis performed on UBL’s employee onboarding journey reveals that out of the total 44 tasks, 10 tasks were value adding, 24 were important for Business value addition while 10 tasks were non-value Adding.

Sr. No.	Tasks/ Processes of Existing Employee Onboarding Process	Performer	VA/ BVA/ NVA
1	Send Final Candidate to HR	Hiring Manager	BVA
2	Request Documents and Details from Applicant	Hiring Manager	NVA
3	Candidate Emails all Documents to Hiring Manager	Candidate	BVA
4	Request documents and details from applicant	HR	BVA
5	Candidate emails all documents to HR	Candidate	BVA

6	HR forwards case for CXO approval	HR	BVA
7	HR creates staff requisition on HR portal	HR	BVA
8	Communicates in-principal nod to HR	CXO	NVA
9	HR nominates interviewer	HR	BVA
10	Background check initiated	HR	BVA
11	Schedule HR interview	HR	VA
12	Communicate interview date	HR	VA
13	Candidate gives HR interview	Candidate	BVA
14	Hiring manager prepares interview assessment	Hiring Manager	BVA
15	HR adds details to the interview assessment	HR	BVA
16	Reviews Candidate Interview Assessment	CXO	NVA
17	checks market internal pay scales	Finance	BVA
18	communicates ideal range to CXO	Finance	NVA
19	CXO reviews and sets offer bounds	CXO	BVA
20	Communicates bounds to HR	CXO	NVA
21	Makes offer to candidate	HR	VA
22	Candidate sends acceptance of offer	Candidate	VA
23	HR prepares offer pack	HR	BVA
24	Enters Candidate Profile into System	IT Support	BVA
25	CXO Approval Is Requested	IT Support	NVA
26	CXO Approves Final Package	CXO	BVA
27	Profile is initiated for medical formalities	IT Support	BVA
28	HR Schedules medical check	HR	NVA
29	Candidate undergoes medical checkup	Candidate	VA
30	Internal medical officer reviews results	HR	BVA

31	medical officer processes online application	HR	BVA
32	HR issues appointment letter	HR	VA
33	Signs contract at regional Head Office	Candidate	VA
34	enters executed contract in database	HR	BVA
35	ships hard copy to HQ for safe keeping	HR	NVA
36	Prepares Joining pack	HR	BVA
37	Courier joining pack to candidate	HR	NVA
38	Employee fills joining forms	Employee	BVA
39	Employee submits joining pack on the date of joining & Initiates Bank Account	Employee	BVA
40	record is filed	HR	BVA
41	Employee ID is created	IT Support	VA
42	Laptop & IP Phone request is initiated by IT Support	IT Support	NVA
43	allocates Laptop & IP Phone	IT Support	VA
44	onboarding completion is notified	HR	VA

A.2 Annexure B- Cycle Time & Processing Time

The cycle time of a process is the average time it takes between the moment the process starts and the moment it completes. By extension, we say that the cycle time of a task is the average time it takes between the moment the task starts and the moment it completes.

The cycle time of a task or of a process can be divided into waiting time and processing time. Waiting time is the portion of the cycle time where no work is being done to advance the process. Processing time, on the other hand, refers to the time that participants spend doing actual work.

Cycle time efficiency is the ratio of overall processing time relative to the overall cycle time. A cycle time efficiency close to 1 indicates that there is little room for improving the cycle time unless relatively radical changes are introduced in the process. A ratio close to zero indicates that there is a significant amount of room for improving cycle time by reducing the waiting time.

A.2.1 Cycle Time & Processing Time of the Existing Process:

The existing employee onboarding process has a cycle time of 39 days and processing time of 4 days.

Tasks/ Processes of Existing Employee Onboarding Process	Performer	Process Time (Mins)	Cycle Time (Mins)	CTE
Send Final Candidate to HR	Hiring Manager	30	60	50%
Request Documents and Details from Applicant	Hiring Manager	10	120	8%
Candidate Emails all Documents to Hiring Manager	Candidate	120	480	25%
Request documents and details from applicant	HR	15	60	25%
Candidate emails all documents to HR	Candidate	10	240	4%
HR forwards case for CXO approval	HR	60	480	13%
HR creates staff requisition on HR portal	HR	60	480	13%
Communicates in-principal nod to HR	CXO	30	240	13%
HR nominates interviewer	HR	15	120	13%
Background check initiated	HR	15	60	25%
Schedule HR interview	HR	10	240	4%
Communicate interview date	HR	5	60	8%
Candidate gives HR interview	Candidate	15	360	4%

Hiring manager prepares interview assessment	Hiring Manager	20	30	67%
HR adds details to the interview assessment	HR	10	30	33%
Reviews Candidate Interview Assessment	CXO	20	60	33%
checks market internal pay scales	Finance	60	480	13%
communicates ideal range to CXO	Finance	10	60	17%
CXO reviews and sets offer bounds	CXO	10	300	3%
Communicates bounds to HR	CXO	5	360	1%
Makes offer to candidate	HR	5	240	2%
Candidate sends acceptance of offer	Candidate	8	16	50%
HR prepares offer pack	HR	120	480	25%
Enters Candidate Profile into System	IT Support	120	240	50%
CXO Approval Is Requested	IT Support	5	30	17%
CXO Approves Final Package	CXO	30	480	6%
Profile is initiated for medical formalities	IT Support	30	240	13%
HR Schedules medical check	HR	15	240	6%
Candidate undergoes medical checkup	Candidate	1	360	0%
Internal medical officer reviews results	HR	15	480	3%
medical officer processes online application	HR	10	120	8%
HR issues appointment letter	HR	120	960	13%
Signs contract at regional Head Office	Candidate	60	480	13%
enters executed contract in database	HR	30	120	25%
ships hard copy to HQ for safe keeping	HR	5	120	4%
Prepares Joining pack	HR	240	960	25%

Courier joining pack to candidate	HR	10	240	4%
Employee fills joining forms	Employee	180	960	19%
Employee submits joining pack on the date of joining & Initiates Bank Account	Employee	60	240	25%
record is filed	HR	30	180	17%
Employee ID is created	IT Support	30	1920	2%
Laptop & IP Phone request is initiated by IT Support	IT Support	30	240	13%
allocates Laptop & IP Phone	IT Support	120	480	25%
onboarding completion is notified	HR	120	480	25%

A.2.2 Cycle Time & Processing Time of the Revised Onboarding Process:

The revised employee onboarding process has a cycle time of 13 days and processing time of 4 days assuming a day to be 8 hours.

Sr. No.	Tasks/ Processes	Performer	Process Time (Mins)	Cycle Time (Mins)	CTE
1	Send Final Candidate to CXO through portal	Hiring Manager	10	15	67%
2	Approve candidate and send approval to hiring manager	CXO	30	60	50%
3	Forward final candidate details to HR through portal	Hiring Manager	5	30	17%
4	Request documents and details from candidate	HR	15	60	25%
5	Candidate emails all documents to HR	Candidate	10	120	8%
6	Upload Documents on portal and initiate background check	HR	20	30	67%

7	HR creates staff requisition on onboarding portal	HR	10	120	8%
8	HR nominates interviewer	HR	15	120	13%
9	Hiring manager nominates interviewer	HR	15	120	13%
10	Communicate interview date from the assigned slot	HR	10	60	17%
11	Candidate gives panel interview	Candidate	15	180	8%
12	Hiring manager adds interview assessment to the portal	Hiring Manager	10	30	33%
13	HR adds interview assessment to the portal	HR	10	30	33%
14	Check market internal pay scales	Finance	60	480	13%
15	Communicate ideal range to HR	Finance	10	60	17%
16	Evaluate remuneration package and make offer to candidate	HR	45	240	19%
17	Candidate sends acceptance of offer	Candidate	240	480	50%
18	HR Schedules medical check	HR	15	240	6%
19	Candidate undergoes medical checkup	Candidate	60	180	33%
20	Internal medical officer reviews results	HR	15	480	3%
21	medical officer processes online application	HR	10	120	8%
22	Create employee ID and make technical access available	IT	120	180	67%
23	Assign computer and voip/ Communication devices	IT	120	180	67%
24	Prepare appointment letter and joining pack	HR	120	480	25%
25	Email appointment letter and joining pack	HR	10	30	33%

26	Employee completes and emails appointment letter and joining pack	Employee	180	480	38%
27	Upload documents on portal	HR	120	240	50%
28	Introduction and Orientation session preparation	HR	30	60	50%
29	Introductions and Orientation session	HR	60	120	50%
30	Training	Relevant Department	600	1000	33%
31	Feedback	HR	60	180	60%
32	Onboarding completion is notified	HR	30	60	50%

A.3 Annexure C- SWOT Analysis

Value SWOT analysis as discussed below was performed to gauge the strengths of UBL's existing employee onboarding process, the threats faced by it and the opportunities available which can be exploited through utilizing its strengths and improving on its weaknesses.

A.3.1 Strengths:

The main strengths of UBL's existing employee onboarding process are discussed below:

Documentation Control:

The existing onboarding process maintains control over candidate documents and ensures they are retained for HR records.

Thorough Evaluation of Candidates:

The use of interviews and assessments, both by HR and the hiring manager, allows for a more thorough evaluation of candidates. Moreover, the inclusion of comprehensive background checks can help ensure the credibility and integrity of new employees.

A.3.2 Weaknesses:

The areas of improvement of UBL's existing employee onboarding process are discussed below:

Lack of Personalization:

The onboarding program lacks personalization, which can make it less engaging for new hires. It starts with finalization by hiring manager and ends at provision of equipment due to which the employees are not efficiently integrated into the Company. Personalization is essential for building a strong connection with employees, and the absence of this element can reduce job satisfaction.

Document Duplication:

Documents and details are being requested twice from the candidate. This is redundancy and replication of steps and is consuming excessive amount of time in the initial phase of the process i.e., waiting time is increased.

HR Interview Value:

Currently, both the hiring manager and the human resources department are separately conducting the candidate's interviews instead of conducting one panel interview at to save the company and candidate's time, resources and efforts. Furthermore, scheduling these sessions at a mutual free time juncture the second time can waste weeks.

Complex Approval Chain:

Approvals are sought from CXO for even minor things like interview assessment reviews and pay scale finalization. Due to centralized decision making and busy schedule of CXO, such reviews/ approvals are usually delayed thereby increasing the wastes in the onboarding process. Involving CXOs for approval at multiple stages can lead to delays in the onboarding process.

Timelines of Medical Checkup Process:

The medical checkup process has a high cycle time because of the restriction to designated labs and their branches from which medical checkup can be performed. These branches are usually situated in Metropolitan cities and people coming from remote areas would require time and resources to reach to these labs and get themselves tested which adds to the cycle time of the process.

Physical Documentation:

The requirement of physical documents and their submission at the head office is also a critique worthy element, with major companies having long since developed online portals, company websites and digital channels for submitting, editing, updating and reviewing

candidate information and documents. Reliance on hard copies and manual data entry can introduce potential errors and inefficiencies.

Limited Cultural Integration:

The Company considers the onboarding process to end when documentation requirements are complete and equipment (laptop and phone) is handed over to the employee. However, cultural integration is vital for employee engagement and long-term retention; a lack thereof can lead to misalignment and potential turnover.

A.3.3 Opportunities:

The opportunities for UBL's existing employee onboarding process are discussed below:

Enhanced Digital Onboarding:

Implementing digital onboarding tools can streamline paperwork, making the onboarding process more efficient. Digitizing paperwork can reduce administrative burden and create a more user-friendly experience for new hires. Implementation of digital workflows for approvals can allow CXOs and other stakeholders to review and approve candidates' hiring status without physical documents, speeding up the process. Similarly, use of a digitized the offer pack that is made available online as soon as the candidate accepts the offer can ensure that important documents and contracts are readily accessible, reducing delays and misunderstandings.

Streamlining:

Simplify the process by eliminating redundancies and unnecessary steps, such as a separate HR interview. Panel interviews can be performed in order to save time and resources.

Automate Background Checks:

The use of third-party verification services can be explored that can automate and expedite background checks, ensuring accuracy and reducing the workload on HR personnel.

Automation can lead to faster results from background checks, enabling HR to move forward with the onboarding process more swiftly.

Mentorship Programs:

Introducing mentorship programs can help new employees feel more connected and supported. Mentorship fosters a sense of belonging and provides a valuable support system for new hires, improving their integration and retention.

A.3.4 Threats:

The potential threats for UBL's existing employee onboarding process are discussed below:

Retention Risk:

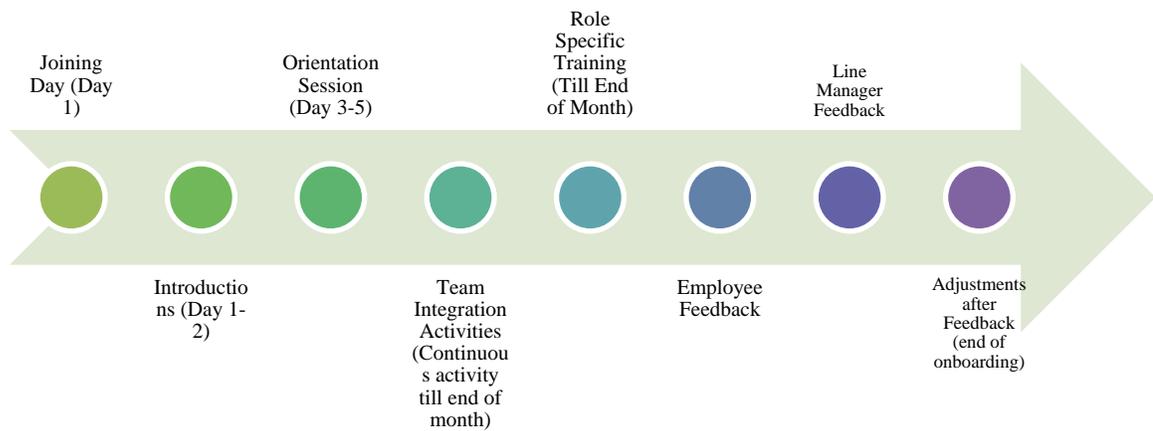
Lengthy and redundant steps are elements of Inadequate onboarding causing negative candidate experience that can lead to higher turnover rates. This can increase recruitment and training costs and disrupt team dynamics.

Competitive Disadvantage:

Failing to provide an effective onboarding process may hinder the organization's ability to attract top talent thereby putting UBL at a competitive disadvantage in the job market.

A.5 Annexure E- Steps to be Added after First Day of Joining

The following timeline can be followed from the joining day of the employee to the end of onboarding process in order to ensure employee integration:



A.6 Annexure F- Waste Analysis

Move

- Wastes that are related to movement. This category includes two types of waste: transportation and motion

Hold

- Wastes arising from holding something. Again, this category includes two types of waste: inventory and waiting

Overdo

- Wastes arising from doing more than is necessary in order to deliver value to the customer or the business. This category encompasses three types of waste: defects, overprocessing, and overproduction