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MANAGING A SUCCESSFUL MULTI-LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION

SuccessFactors Onboarding

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Localization is the process of adapting a product or content to a specific locale or market. Translation is only one of several elements of the localization process.

Introduction

Many companies today have aspirations to localize their system, with a mindset of maximizing their employees' interactions through HR technology. What better place to start than with a new employee's onboarding? Throughout our experience with various customers, we have realized how important the user's preferred language can be during his/her first steps. We want to leverage these benefits for all our clients.

A successful Multi-Language Implementation for SuccessFactors Onboarding will begin with gathering the right team, addressing the primary challenges to balance capacity and intricacy, and building a communication strategy from beginning to end. This article will provide all the necessary keys to leverage the language diversity and make it a powerful opportunity to distinguish yourself from your competition.
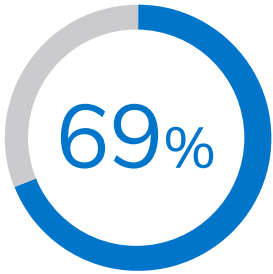
Think Global, Act Local

Think global, act local. Though the concept might be simple, it is way more intricate when it comes to implementing it. Companies have understood the necessity of leveraging the diversity that lies within their walls. It has become a collaboration between all advocates inside the organization to thrive for the same objective: pursuing self-actualization while going above and beyond, stretching the limits and reaching corporate goals.

Why Act Local?

Our world is changing. Our needs are further evolving. The time where consumers had only one option available to them is over. We live in an era filled with limitless choices to fulfill our demands. Customers are gaining more access to the information while being offered competitive pricing, and compelling customized solutions for them. It is no longer an option for companies to go with what the customer wants, it has **become mandatory**. Your employees demand the same.

In 2019, employees are no longer inclined to adapt themselves to a different language than their own. Nowadays, companies have realized that they can achieve greatness because of the diversity they possess thanks to their employees. The first obstacle to overcome is the language barrier. How many times have we misunderstood an assignment because we did not have the correct translation? How many times have we failed to understand the rules established by the company policies because of a double-meaning?
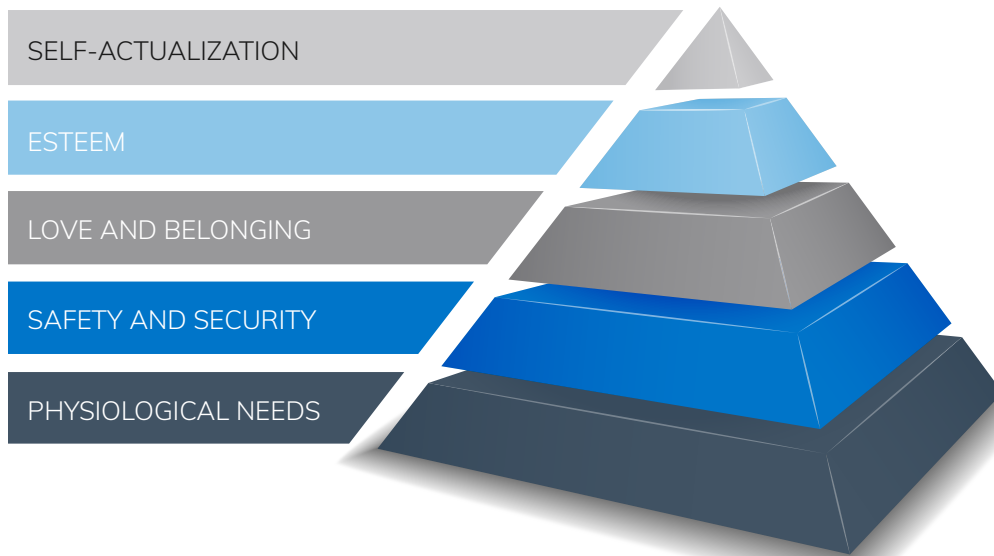
High Cost of Ineffective Onboarding

A recent survey by Corning Glass Works of more than 30,000 U.S. organizations revealed that 69% of employees are more likely to stay with a company for three years if they experience great onboarding. The main reasons why people left organization were that these new employees were overwhelmed by the workload, neglected by their peers and discouraged by the lack of training. When joining a company, many employees are still deciding on the path they want their career to follow. They need to feel as if they have finally joined a firm where they will be able to establish themselves. Not only it is critical for them but think about how much money will be thrown away when your company is not properly onboarding its new employees. Nearly half (45%) of Human Resource departments estimate that over $12,500 a year is wasted on ineffective onboarding. It could happen to you and your company, but it doesn't have to.

Your Employees – The Cornerstone

Remember that your **employees are the cornerstone** of your company. Without them, without their determination and hard-work, the results would not be the same. The American Psychologist Abraham Harold Maslow explained through his theory of psychological health predicated on fulfilling innate human needs in priority that self-actualization is at the top of the pyramid.

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SELF-ACTUALIZATION

ESTEEM

LOVE AND BELONGING

SAFETY AND SECURITY

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Why is this related to a successful implementation of a multi-language of SuccessFactors Onboarding? Self-actualization means living up to our full potential as human beings, finding meaning, being happy, experiencing new things and becoming all we can be. Imagine you are a French speaking person – with limited skills in English; hired by a company established across Canada, with offices in all provinces. Imagine that all documentation for your onboarding was sent to you was only in English. *Strike one.*

1 *https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/hidden-costs-employee-onboarding-reduce*

The first day you set foot in the office, you have to sign paperwork and read pages and pages of corporate policies... also presented in English. *Strike two*.

Then, you are assigned a buddy/mentor who does not speak French. *Strike three*.

Do you feel that this setup would allow you to feel welcomed in the company? Do you think you would be able to become all you can be, when you are completely out of your comfort zone? And would you be able to discuss the way you feel with your mentor, when you are not even speaking the same language? It is crucial for your new hire to come out of his/her shell and it starts from the first communication, whether it is a notification, or it is done on day one. And it has to be in the new employee's language. That way you are setting a solid foundation, one on which you can build a relationship with your employee.

Balance Capacity and Intricacy

The Right Team

First and foremost, and it goes without saying, you need to surround yourself with experts and experienced people within your company. They need to have a solid knowledge of the SuccessFactors solution as well as your company's current onboarding process. Next, for a multi-language implementation, you must have one primary individual that will be responsible for the translations. In our previous implementations, we have seen that when our customers designated someone that had other responsibilities in the project, the translation tended to be left aside. Therefore, we strongly recommend having one person assigned to that task – with the full understanding that the project may take up to 75% of their time to achieve key milestones. And lastly, this person needs to be in the project during the entire process. It is essential to understand your team's workload and constraints. The more languages are added, the more testing is required, which means resource allocation must be considered from the early planning stages.

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The Right Timing

We have seen in the past that companies consider translations as a last step in this specific implementation. They are inclined to leave it untapped, waiting for the rest of the configuration to be solid. With our previous experiences, we believe such to be a mistake. Fortunately, this can easily be avoided. As mentioned before, translation is only one of the several elements of the localization process. In addition to translation, this process may also include (and is not limited to):

Adapting design and layout to fit translated text

Adopting accurate local formats for dates, addresses, and phone numbers

Addressing local regulations and legal requirements

Converting to local conditions (such as currencies and units of measure)

You have now grasped that those elements need to be considered as soon as the project begins and then should be addressed throughout the process; otherwise, your company would be missing on key points that could jeopardize the entire timeline of the project. It is not as simple as replacing one word in one language by the corresponding word in another one.

You can refer to the Rizing HCM opinion paper on Technical Components of a Multi-Language Implementation for more detailed information about configurations required to achieve a 100% localized experience for your new employees across the globe.

Approvals and review

In general, localization adds a weighty layer of additional work to any implementation project, and Onboarding projects are often complex even without localization. Not only does the system need to be modified for each language, but all of the content presented new employees, managers and internal stakeholders do as well. We often remind our clients that this means there may be additional reviews and approvals required by Legal and/or Communications Offices. You'll want to work with your Project Manager to ensure these steps are clearly outlined and accommodated in the implementation timeline.

Communication strategy

Now, you have chosen to carry out an Onboarding implementation in multiple languages, you have selected and customized the system with the right content along with the perfect translations. Your team is ready to be trained.

Five reasons to promote multilingual Onboarding:

Homogenize your Onboarding process.

Customize the content to reflect the preferred language of the user.

Hand over policies and documents in a language that any new hire will comprehend.

Allow manager and new hire with different languages to communicate through a set of pre-determined steps.

A smoother experience for your new hire.

It's important to communicate the reasons why a multi-language Onboarding has been enforced... and the powerful impact this can have on creating a welcoming and effective onboarding experience.

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