



absorb

Case study



## Industry

Software

## Use case

Employee onboarding, employee upskilling

## Solution

**Absorb LMS, Absorb Amplify, Absorb Create, Absorb Engage**

# Challenge

- Lack of structured onboarding processes.
- No departmental or role-specific training.
- Unable to track against business objectives.
- High degree of manual work in onboarding process.

# Solution

- Implemented general and specialized onboarding paths.
- Embedded Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) training.
- Gamification for greater engagement.
- Connected LMS to Human Capital Management (HCM) system.
- Creating customized learning content with Absorb Create and Create AI.

# Results

- **28% reduction** in employee attrition.
- **50% improvement** in employee satisfaction.
- **20% faster** time to productivity from product boot camp.





## Summary

As a leader in learning management software, Absorb knows the impact an LMS has on employee onboarding. That's why, when the company needed to revamp its onboarding processes, it turned to the features of its own LMS to develop a new program that improved new employee engagement, accelerated time to productivity, and helped foster a sense of culture and community.

## Cheryl Yuran

### Chief Human Resources Officer

“ Best-in-class onboarding must be intentional and strategic... We've seen a 28% reduction in employee attrition, 50% increase in satisfaction, and 20% quicker time to productivity by creating a scalable process that gets new hires to proficiency faster while building a true sense of belonging.







# How Absorb achieved onboarding excellence: Transitioning from challenges to realized ROI

As a rapidly growing, global company, [Absorb Software](#) experiences firsthand many of the challenges its customers face.

Firstly, the company's over 600 employees operate mainly remotely worldwide. Secondly, since 2021, Absorb has had the good fortune of experiencing massive employee growth to match its success. Year-over-year headcount has increased approximately 52% since 2022, averaging more than 150 hires a year.

Around that time, the human resources team recognized it needed to upgrade its onboarding system to streamline processes, create structure, and increase employee retention.



Naturally, the Calgary, Canada-based company looked to how learning management software, specifically its own Absorb LMS, could overcome the challenges of its existing onboarding processes. The company wasn't alone, since according to Gallup, 88% of employees think their employers need better onboarding process.

The company needed an onboarding program that elevated employee engagement and retention, sped up time to proficiency, cultivated a sense of belonging — a growing challenge with remote work — and reduced the workload burden on human resources and SME experts. It was also essential for the program to have a feedback loop that the company could use to drive continuous improvement.





## Out with the old...

The existing onboarding process, while once adequate, needed to be revamped to meet the needs of Absorb Software's fast-growing employee base.

**It lacked structure outside of a basic onboarding path and had no departmental- or role-specific training.** It also couldn't track success against larger business outcomes such as employee retention. In addition, product-specific training relied almost entirely on the use of subject matter experts, placing a heavy burden on their workload.

Absorb's remote workforce created a familiar challenge for the company's onboarding efforts.

"We're in the same boat as many of our customers in hybrid or fully remote environments, where the **importance of being strategic in your onboarding efforts is crucial**," says Cheryl Yuran, Chief Human Resource Officer at Absorb.

"For many new hires, this is their first entry into the organization. They aren't walking our halls and feeling the culture. **They must be shown company culture and their value to the organization through the onboarding process.**"

"If performed ineffectively, we risk turnover, which starts the 'hamster wheel' of hiring and spending resources. It also adds to the feeling of isolation amplified by hybrid and remote environments. So doing what we can to **make sure that we get people onboarded and building connections quickly is critical.**"

Yuran notes that an effective onboarding and learning program achieves "**the 5Cs:**" **culture, clarity, connection, compliance, and confidence.**





## ...In with its LMS

The Absorb Human Resources team took advantage of the functionality and features to overhaul its onboarding program with an eye on best practices.

“We took a holistic approach and built a team around our general onboarding path and areas where we need specific onboarding paths for different roles,” Yuran says. “So, we have our general track and then there's a leader track that happens after that to not only say what is it like to work at Absorb, but what is it like to be a leader at Absorb.”

“It was very important to us to convey this early on, and we embedded our DE&I training as part of our onboarding process.”

Yuran suggests Absorb LMS's integration strength provided perhaps one of the biggest benefits. **The ability for Absorb to connect easily to the company's HCM system, ADP, meant that once a structure was created, most onboarding activities could be automated.**

For content curation and creation, the team uses Amplify Max , Absorb's high-quality learning content library, and Absorb Create and Create AI, its powerful online course creation tools, to **develop and provide a wide variety of customized learning content quickly and easily.**





# First things first

New hires are given a streamlined and organized view of their learner curriculum in the Absorb portal. Everything is laid out simply, so should new employees need to return to something they've already completed, it's easy to find.

The company's onboarding curriculum includes a mix of videos, amplified courses, policy signoffs, as well as company culture and engagement activities. It consists of some static content along with policy acknowledgments and quizzes. Absorb takes advantage of the LMS's ability to use mixed media within these onboarding courses.

The first course is, naturally, getting familiar with the LMS — but not from the perspective of a user. “One of our core values is championing customer success, and we think it's critically important,” Yuran says. “No matter your role in the organization, you understand the product and the vision behind the product.”







## Baking in DE&I

That course is followed by one designed by the CEO Kimberly Williams herself using Absorb Create. It introduces the new hire to the company culture and values directly on day one. Yuran says, “This is one of the most impactful onboarding sessions.”

“We want the employees to hear what it's like to be at Absorb, what we're all about as a company, what our vision is and our values from the CEO in our own words and her style.”

Policy acknowledgments are automated, and tracked by Absorb Analyze. In addition to digital signoffs, the platform also delivers PDFs for employees to acknowledge physically, as required.

The HR team leveraged automation to embed Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) training into onboarding in a way that improves retention and recognition of commitment.

It uses post-enrollment automation to create a learning journey through six stages, each covering three to five “micro-topics.” This helps control the pace, allowing time for reflection. This curriculum must be completed in the first 60 days of an employee's start.

“We want our new hires to go through those journeys,” Yuran says. “But we don't want them to plow through them and not really take time to reflect on the content.”

“We use the post-enrollment automation in the LMS to pulse out how those journeys show up in their dashboard to take. This gives more attention to the content itself, but it also helps to transition the employee between onboarding, ongoing, and role-specific learning.”

The company's use of gamification — more on that shortly — further contributes to DE&I learning engagement and highlights its importance to Absorb.



## Adding engagement and fun from the start

Onboarding engagement starts even before joining the team, Yuran points out. To improve new hire engagement and success the company leverages the LMS to infuse engagement, fun, and real-time learning into our full recruitment and onboarding processes.

First, all shortlisted candidates selected for interviews with hiring managers are provided access to a dedicated LMS landing page. **This dedicated portal provides candidates a realistic overview of the company culture, what it means to be a great Absorb employee (“Absorber”), and with learning resources on how to perform their best during the rest of the hiring process.**

If selected for hire, the company uses best practices that help new hires to prepare for their first day, such as sharing a “get to know you survey” and selecting their company swag — which often goes a long way in increasing connectivity and getting the new hire’s family on board.

Once onboarding has started, further motivation is provided in the form of gamification through Absorb Engage. **Participants can also receive recognition in the form of hand-written notes through Engage with completion pins and leaderboards for friendly competition.** Employees like seeing their names in lights, but it’s also important that they see a few other important individuals represented. **The DE&I training leaderboard, for example, includes management visibility right up to the CEO, showcasing the company’s commitment.**

“So, from several different perspectives, it helps to encourage engagement and also a great way to show that we are committed to a topic that we’re very passionate about,” Yuran says.

New employees are **automatically enrolled** in company town halls and can access past ones from their dashboard. Yuran says this provides a **dynamic, timely component to support the static content** of the onboarding. For instance, while Williams’s session gives the background on the company, its culture, and core values, the town halls provide a current sense of what’s going on at Absorb.



# Ten-hut: product boot camp

To achieve one of its significant goals, a reduction in workload demand on SMEs, the HR team also developed a two-week product boot camp program leveraging the LMS.

Before the onboarding revamp, new hires were provided with knowledge articles and static content. Imparting product expertise was heavily reliant on SMEs. “Getting them to release some of that burden is one of the key benefits of an LMS,” Yuran says.

Now, employees are assigned personal portals for practice and provided with **self-guided content and far fewer frequent live sessions with experts**. This helps to align with our corporate values of providing **digestible, real-time, and on-demand learning opportunities**.



80%

Increase in fully trained employees compared to previous boot camp.

75%

Increase in 4-5 star ratings from employees attending the boot camp.

25%

Increase in teams using the boot camp over the past nine months.

20%

Quicker time to productivity (from 5 weeks to 4 weeks).

## Going from strength to strength

The results of the product boot camp and the new and improved general onboarding program have been telling. The company has seen exceptional improvement in several business-impacting metrics, including a **28% reduction in employee attrition** and a **50% increase in employee satisfaction**.



**“We've seen great results and not only increased satisfaction, but also just time to proficiency and the depth of their understanding of the solution has been amplified using our new process.”**



## Continuous growth and key takeaways

“Best-in-class onboarding must be intentional and strategic around its setup and alignment with the business goals you're trying to achieve,” says Yuran of the onboarding program revamp's key takeaways. “It **needs to engage your new hires and to have the immediate outcome of retaining them and getting them to proficiency as quickly as possible** — so they feel like a valued part of your team.”

“Most importantly, creating a sense of belonging with things like buddy programs and making sure they're very engaged with their manager, making sure they understand your culture, so they know they fit and **showing that they're incredibly valued**. This can be done so well now using the **powerful social learning capabilities of our Together platform**.”

She adds that the onboarding revamp illustrated how important it is to create a scalable process for learning professionals, and the value of asynchronous learning in freeing up time to focus on other work – like taking the program to the next level.







As intended, the HR team created a **feedback loop** so it could be constantly improving. All new hires are provided with an eNPS (employee Net Promoter Score) on their first-year anniversary, **participation averages 67% with an average score of 60.2**. In the future, the HR team will be digging more heavily into reporting through Absorb Analyze to push the onboarding process deeper into the organization.

Survey feedback from employees is indicating the strength of the onboarding process, including employees stating they have clear understanding of expectations **(92%)**, the autonomy to do their job **(91%)**, a recognition of DEI **(88%)**, and the information needed to do their jobs effectively **(94%)**. **86%** of new employees say they are comfortable voicing ideas and opinions even if they are different from others.

“We will use those feedback loops to ensure that it's always an **ongoing learning journey and one that continuously builds.**”







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