

The First 90 Days

New Employee Survival Guide for Canadian Founders

What to do before, during, and after your next hire so they actually stay.

MELSTREAM HR INC.



How to Use This Guide

This guide walks you through the three phases of a great employee start: **pre-boarding** before Day 1, **the first week**, and the **30-60-90 day framework**.

Work through it in order. Adapt the checklists, templates, and questions to your business. The goal is not a rigid script: it is making sure nothing important falls through the cracks.

-  All compliance notes reference Canadian employment standards. Always verify current requirements for your specific province.

01

Phase 1: Pre-Boarding

Everything before Day 1

02

Phase 2: First Week

Days 1 to 7: tone and connection

03

Phase 3: Days 8 to 90

Learn, Contribute, Lead



Phase 1: Before Day 1, Pre- Boarding

The offer is accepted. Here is what happens next.

Pre-boarding is the period between offer acceptance and the first day. Founders who do it well have fewer no-shows, faster ramp-ups, and employees who arrive already confident they made the right decision, not still reconsidering it.

Fewer No-Shows

Engaged candidates who hear from you before Day 1 are far less likely to ghost or back out.

Faster Ramp-Up

Access, tools, and paperwork handled in advance means Day 1 is about people, not logistics.

Confident Arrivals

Employees who feel prepared arrive ready to contribute, not still second-guessing their decision.

Pre-Boarding Checklist

Admin & Compliance

- Send signed offer letter and confirm start date in writing
- Collect TD1 Federal and TD1 Provincial forms before first pay period
- Collect SIN and store it securely
- Collect direct deposit info and set up in payroll system
- Confirm WSIB registration is in place before Day 1

Workspace & Tools

- Set up company email and send login credentials before Day 1
- Prepare laptop or remote workstation, fully configured and tested
- Set up access to all required software, shared drives, and tools
- Add to team calendars, recurring meetings, and relevant channels

Culture & Connection

- Send a warm, personal welcome email with Day 1 agenda attached
- Notify existing team of new hire's name, role, and start date
- Assign a buddy or point of contact for Day 1 questions
- Prepare a small welcome moment: card, shoutout, or desk setup

Welcome Email Template

Use this template to send a warm, professional welcome before Day 1. Personalize it. A genuine tone goes a long way.

Subject: Welcome to the team, [Name]! We are so glad you are joining us!

Hi [Name],

We are genuinely excited to have you joining **[Company Name]** as our new **[Job Title]**.

Your start date is **[Date]** and we want you to arrive feeling fully prepared.

What to expect on Day 1:

Start time: [time] | Location or login: [address or Zoom link]

Dress code: [casual / business casual] | What to bring: [ID, etc.]

Your Day 1 agenda is attached so you know exactly what we have planned.

If you have any questions before you start, reach out any time.

See you [Day], [Date]!

[Your Name] | [Title] | [Company Name] | [Phone]

 Pro tip: Send this email within 24 hours of offer acceptance. The sooner they hear from you, the more confident they feel about their decision.

Phase 2: The First Week, Days 1 to 7

Set the tone. Everything they experience this week becomes their baseline.

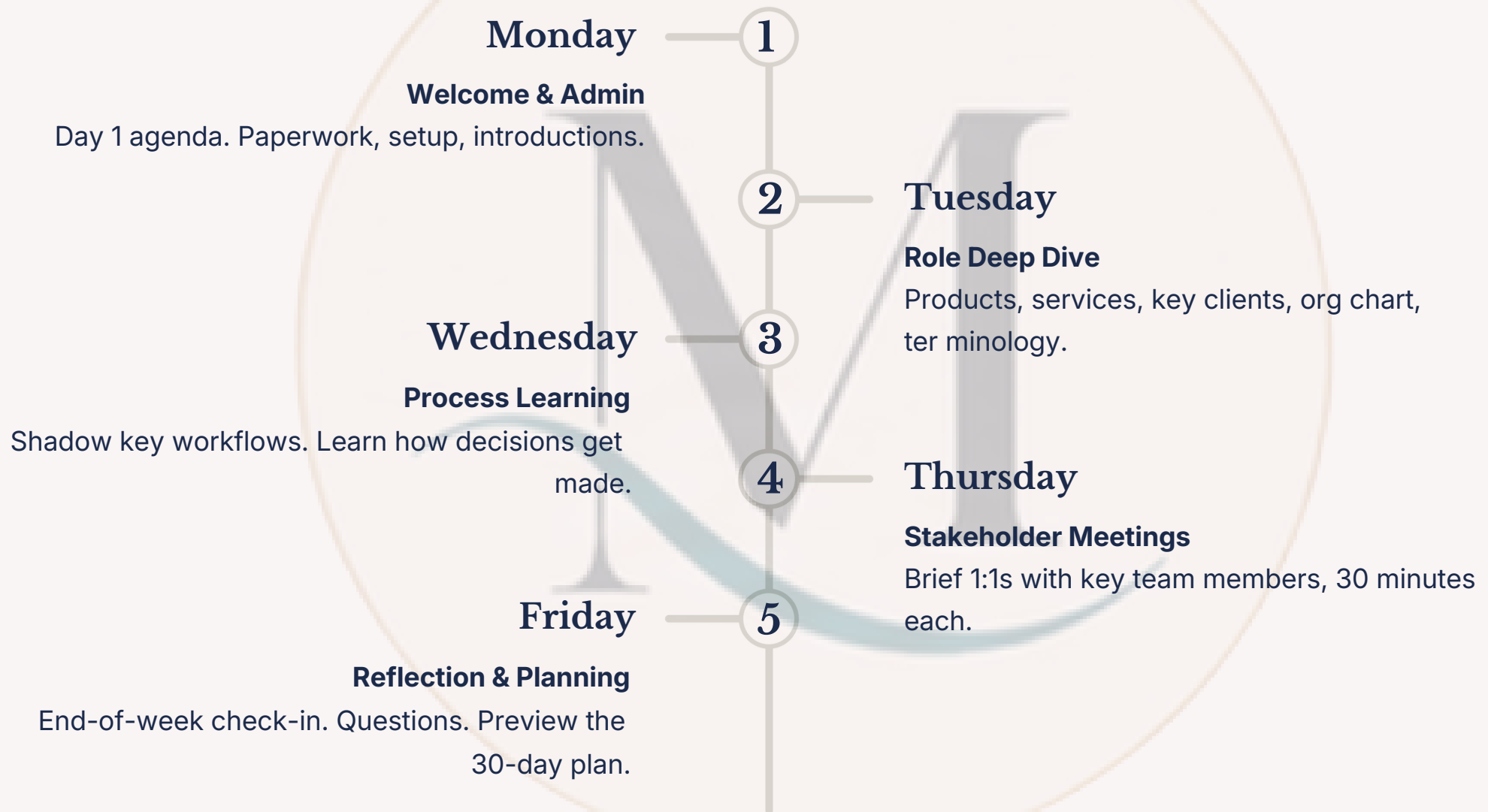
The goal of Week 1 is not full productivity; it is **confidence and connection**. An employee who feels certain they made the right choice will outperform one who is still deciding six months later.

Time	Activity	What to Cover
9:00 AM	Welcome and Tour	Personal greeting from founder. Office or workspace tour. Team introductions.
9:30 AM	Admin and Paperwork	TD1 forms, direct deposit, SIN collection, emergency contact form.
10:00 AM	Role Overview	Job description, top priorities, what success looks like in 90 days.
10:45 AM	Systems Setup	Email, software access, tools walkthrough. Confirm everything works.
12:00 PM	Team Lunch	Relaxed. Connection is the goal. Not information transfer.
1:30 PM	Culture and How We Work	Communication norms, meeting cadence, how decisions are made here.
2:30 PM	Buddy Time	Time with their buddy or observing real workflows. No pressure.
4:00 PM	End of Day Check-In	How was Day 1? Any questions? Preview the Week 1 plan.

Week 1 Day-by-Day Focus

Each day of the first week has a distinct purpose.

Keep the structure loose enough to breathe, but intentional enough to build momentum.



- ❑ The goal of Week 1 is confidence and connection, not full productivity. Resist the urge to overload your new hire with information.

Phase 3: Days 8 to 90 — The Plan

Learn. Contribute. Lead. Three stages, one clear arc.

The 30-60-90 day framework gives your new hire a clear arc for their first three months. Share it with them at the end of Week 1 and review progress at each milestone.

1

Day 30: LEARN

Listen and observe before acting.
Understanding is the goal, not output.

2

Day 60: CONTRIBUTE

Begin contributing independently
with moderate support from you.

3

Day 90: LEAD

Full ownership and confident
independence. Probation review
held.

The 30-60-90 Day Milestones

Day 30: Learn

- All system access and tools fully working
- All onboarding paperwork and compliance documents complete
- Can accurately describe the company's products, services, and key clients
- Has met all key stakeholders and team members
- First small, achievable deliverable completed

Day 60: Contribute

- Working independently on core responsibilities without daily check-ins
- Actively contributing in team meetings, not just observing
- At least two meaningful deliverables completed
- Has received and acknowledged specific, written feedback
- Any performance concerns identified and addressed directly

Day 90: Lead

- Fully owns core responsibilities, no day-to-day supervision needed
- Proactively identifies problems and brings solutions
- Has proposed or implemented at least one process improvement
- Contributes positively to team culture and dynamics
- Self-assessment completed. 90-day review held. Goals for Q2 set.

Check-In Questions at Each Milestone

30-Day Check-In

- How has the first month gone from your perspective?
- Is the role what you expected? Any surprises, good or challenging?
- Do you have everything you need to do your job well?
- What do you still feel unclear or uncertain about?
- What can I do better as your manager to support you?

60-Day Check-In

- How confident do you feel in the role right now, on a scale of 1 to 10? What would move it higher?
- What are you most proud of contributing in the past 60 days?
- Where are you still feeling uncertain or less supported than you need?
- Is there any feedback I should share with you from the team or your work so far?
- Any concerns about the role, the team, or the company I should know about?

The 90-Day Review: Canadian Compliance Note

Schedule the 90-day review at least one week before the probationary period ends. Ask the employee to complete a self-assessment beforehand so the conversation starts with their perspective.

⚠ In Ontario, the *Employment Standards Act* provides different notice obligations during the first 3 months of employment. Always confirm your province's current probationary period rules before any termination decision at this stage.

Confirm employment in writing after a successful probation period. **Document the conversation regardless of outcome.**



Schedule Early

Book the review at least one week before probation ends



Self-Assessment First

Have the employee complete a self-assessment before the meeting



Document Everything

Confirm employment in writing. Document the conversation regardless of outcome.

Want Every Template Already Built for You?

The **Melstream Employee Onboarding Toolkit** includes every checklist, agenda, 30-60-90 plan, check-in template, self-assessment, and 90-day review form, ready to use from Day 1.

Every Checklist

Pre-boarding, Week 1, and 30-60-90 checklists fully built and ready to adapt.

All Templates

Welcome email, Day 1 agenda, check-in questions, and 90-day review form.

Canadian Compliance

Every document grounded in Canadian employment standards, not generic HR advice.

[Get the Full Toolkit](#)



About Melstream HR Inc.

Ser vice	What It Gives You
Digital HR Toolkits	Ready-to-use hiring, onboarding, policy, and performance tools. Starting at \$79.
HR Audit	Complete diagnostic of your HR practices with risk rating, written report, and action plan, completed in under a week.
Fractional HR Services	Part-time HR leadership embedded in your business. From \$1,500/month.
HR Advisory	Scoped project support for terminations, compensation reviews, policy builds, and more.

Who We Are

This guide is part of the Melstream HR free resource library: practical, Canadian-specific HR tools built for small business founders who are managing people without a dedicated HR team.

Everything Melstream creates is grounded in Canadian employment law, designed for founders with **3 to 50 employees**, and written in plain language. No jargon. No theory. Just what you actually need to know.



Legal Disclaimer

This guide is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or HR advice. Employment law varies by province and territory in Canada. Always verify current requirements with your provincial employment standards office or consult a qualified employment lawyer before making employment decisions.

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