



## Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration Office of Audit

**THE ONBOARDING PROCESS HAS IMPROVED,  
BUT ADDITIONAL STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN  
TO ENSURE EMPLOYEES HAVE THE TOOLS,  
RESOURCES, AND KNOWLEDGE TO BE  
SUCCESSFUL AND PRODUCTIVE**

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## Highlights

Highlights of Report Number: 2012-10-091 to the Internal Revenue Service Deputy Commissioner for Operations Support and the Deputy Commissioner for Services and Enforcement.

### IMPACT ON TAXPAYERS

Onboarding is a year-long process that integrates new employees into the workforce. The IRS has improved its process for onboarding new employees and some processes are working well. However, the new employee experience is not always positive, and the process for making improvements needs to be more coordinated. Improving processes would reduce the substantial cost of replacing employees who leave the IRS and would help the IRS meet its mission by ensuring employees quickly become productive.

### WHY TIGTA DID THE AUDIT

This review was requested by the IRS and addresses the major management challenge of Human Capital. The overall objective was to determine whether the IRS's onboarding program was appropriately integrating new employees for positions in mission-critical occupations into the IRS workforce to become productive employees as quickly as possible.

### WHAT TIGTA FOUND

The IRS would like new employees to have a consistently positive experience during their first year with the IRS. To help managers make this a reality, the IRS developed guidance (a toolkit and website) that incorporates industry best practices for effectively integrating new employees into the IRS. Also, recent hires have reported positive experiences such as the handling of administrative issues and being introduced to the IRS's mission and their new job.

While the IRS has taken steps to make the new employee experience positive, managers that TIGTA interviewed were not following best practices identified in the comprehensive guidance the IRS developed for

them. As a result, some best practices that would help new employees feel welcome and help them become more productive were not fully implemented. For example, one-quarter of the new employees TIGTA contacted were not assigned a coach or mentor when they arrived, and approximately 29 percent stated that the onboarding experience did not accelerate their ability to reach full productivity.

To improve, the IRS must obtain feedback from new employees. While the IRS and the Department of the Treasury use questionnaires to obtain input from new employees, these questionnaires do not address a new employee's entire first year, and existing measures would not help the IRS identify specific areas of concern. Also, the IRS does not have a documented onboarding strategy that would help it tie together actions being taken to study and improve the new employee experience.

### WHAT TIGTA RECOMMENDED

TIGTA recommended that the IRS Human Capital Officer develop an agency-wide onboarding strategy. The strategy should include components such as a checklist with step-by-step guidance that should be completed during the onboarding process and require managers to complete the checklist, a process to collect feedback from managers on how the onboarding process could be improved, and additional measures and analyses to evaluate the onboarding process.

IRS management agreed with the recommendation and responded that efforts are underway to convene an IRS team to develop a corporate IRS onboarding strategy.

### READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full IRS response, go to:

<http://www.treas.gov/tigta/auditreports/2012reports/201210091fr.pdf>.