



# **CHICO'S<sup>®</sup> FAS, INC.**

## Case Study

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### Executive Summary

Chico's FAS is a fast growing, specialty retail business offering classy, casual and dressy women's apparel. They own and manage the Chico's, White House Black Market, Sonoma and Fitigues brands. The business has experienced 30-40+% growth in the past 3 years. The executive leadership team understood that the employee population would also need to continue to grow to support the business. They also quickly determined the need to employ a process that would provide new associates with the information and support they required to be successful at Chico's.

### The Business Challenge

Chico's FAS and its leadership were very focused on hiring and investing in the right talent to support the growth of the organization. They soon realized that once the new associates came onboard, the company was faced with successfully integrating them into both the organization and the local community. In addition, it was very important to the leadership to foster and build upon the culture that had been established at Chico's. Each of these initiatives was proving to be challenging.

While attracting top talent was made easier given the success and opportunity of the organization, the local community did not lend itself to meeting the needs of young professionals. In addition, the Chico's hiring managers expected their new associates to "hit the ground running" without adequate support or knowledge. The result was a more-than-desired turnover rate and a realization that the company's culture and values were not being passed on to new associates in a way that they could embrace and perpetuate them.

### How Connect the Dots Provided a Solution

The Chico's FAS Human Resources leadership recognized that an onboarding process was an essential element in helping them address this business challenge. They decided to partner with Connect the Dots to develop an onboarding process built on the best practices that CTD provides while blending in some of their current processes.

During the Discovery phase of the work it was agreed that Chico's needed a "two-pronged" onboarding with common resources to address culture and personal transition goals.

The two "prongs" were:

- 1.) a process for the Director and above population, facilitated by the HR Partners



2.) a process for the Manager and below population, more self-driven with pre-determined touch points for both the hiring managers and HR Partners.

In addition, it was determined that the process methodology would be housed on the Chico's intranet.

### **Value Delivered**

This customized designed process enabled Chico's FAS to provide all of their new hires with a common onboarding experience without taxing the Human Resources partners or the hiring managers. The process also pulled together several existing resources into one central and accessible place for both new and existing associates to access on their company intranet. These resources included company history, culture, as well as information about the local community and managing personal transition needs.

The process also enables Chico's Human Resources partners and hiring managers to collaborate right from the beginning of a new associate's at Chico's in order to give that new associate what he/she needs to be successful throughout their tenure.

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## Conditions for Success in Onboarding

Condition	Chico's FAS Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear objective for onboarding</li> </ul>	Integrate high number of new associates in a way that fosters the Chico's culture and local community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audience(s) for process</li> </ul>	All Associate with separate roadmaps for new leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly defined roles for process participants</li> </ul>	Specific roles based on audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity to implement</li> </ul>	Self-driven for manager and below, HR facilitated Director and above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Communication/Implementation Plan</li> </ul>	Implemented through VPHR and executive team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant Buy-in</li> </ul>	Pilot targeted at high-growth brand for a specific time period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured, yet flexible solution</li> </ul>	Web-based solution for associates, HR and hiring managers with all resources in one place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metrics</li> </ul>	Understanding of culture, speed to performance, integration into community