

Connect the Dots Case Study



chico's FAS[®]

CHICO'S[®] FAS, INC. Onboarding

Onboarding: A Specialty Women's Clothing Chain Designs a Better Way to Integrate Leadership and Achieve Success

The specialty retail market is highly competitive. Buyers have a wealth of choices, making it difficult for any one retailer to stand out. Product differentiation is challenging, so retailers rely on brand equity to build loyalty and drive higher prices.

Retailers need employees who are equipped for these challenges and on the same page to reach a company's benchmarks. Specialty retail business, Chico's[®] FAS, Inc., recognized gaps in their onboarding program. They needed the right tools to help their employees reach the organization's goals.

Founded in 1983 by a three-person operation on Sanibel Island, Florida, Chico's[®] FAS is a fast growing, specialty

Quick Shot

Company Name

Chico's[®] FAS, Inc.
<http://chicosfas.com>

Industry

Retail: Specialty
Women's Clothing

Key Challenges

- ▶ Successfully integrate new hires both into the organization and the local community
- ▶ Build upon the culture that had been established at Chico's[®]
- ▶ Managers expected their new associates to "hit the ground running"

Solution and Services

- ▶ A "two pronged" onboarding approach with common resources to address culture and personal transition goals

Solution Highlights

- ▶ A process for the Director and above population, facilitated by the HR Partners
- ▶ A more self-driven process with predetermined touch points for both the hiring managers and HR Partners.
- ▶ The process methodology was housed on the Chico's[®] intranet

Key Benefits

- ▶ New hires had a common onboarding experience without taxing the HR partners or the hiring managers
- ▶ Resources were accessible from one central location

retail business offering classy, casual and dressy women's apparel. It currently has over 620 boutiques and 118 outlet mall locations. They employ over 23,000 associates and produce over \$2.5 billion in yearly revenue. They also own and manage the White House Black Market, Sonoma and Fitigues brands.

The business has experienced 30-40+ percentage growth in the past three years. The executive leadership team understood the employee population would also need to continue to grow to support the business. They 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 Challenge: Leadership Needs a Seamless Transition into the Organization and Local Community

Chico's® FAS and its leadership 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 challenged to successfully

integrate them both into 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 it was easier to attract top talent – given the success and opportunity of the organization – the local community didn't contribute much toward the needs of young professionals.

The Chico's® hiring managers also 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.

The Solution: Onboarding with a “Two Pronged” Approach – For Directors and Managers

The Chico's® FAS Human Resources leadership recognized that an onboarding process was an essential element in helping them address this

business challenge. They chose to partner with Connect the Dots (CTD) to develop an onboarding process built on the best practices that CTD provided 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 approach 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 and 2) a process for the Manager and below population, more self-driven with predetermined 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.

A Common Experience Empowers Everyone to Reach Their Goals with Less Effort

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 in order to give that new associate what he/she needs to be successful throughout their tenure.

Now with a more consistent onboarding experience, Chico's® FAS is able to move ahead with less employee turnover and increase their overall productivity.

<http://www.connectthedotsconsulting.com/contact.htm>

Our coaching and feedback processes give your leaders and teams "real-life" situations to work through. We apply your organization's needs to our approach which takes the guess-work out of the how to translate new ideas and behavior changes in a real world setting. Contact us to get started.

