



# MetLife's Customer Academy: Building First-Year Success Employee Engagement

MetLife

Best New Hire Onboarding Program

November 2024



## Company Background



# MetLife

Company-at-a-Glance	
<b>Headquarters</b>	New York, NY, USA
<b>Year Founded</b>	1868
<b>Revenue</b>	~\$67 billion (2023)
<b>Employees</b>	~45,000
<b>Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)</b>	MetLife has operations in more than 40 markets globally and holds leading market positions in the United States, Japan, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.
<b>Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)</b>	MetLife, Inc., through its subsidiaries and affiliates (collectively, “MetLife”) is one of the world’s leading financial services companies, providing insurance,



	annuities, employee benefits and asset management services.
<b>Industry</b>	Insurance
<b>Stock Symbol</b>	NYSE: MET
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.metlife.com">www.metlife.com</a>

### Budget and Timeframe

Budget and Timeframe	
<b>Overall budget</b>	N/A
<b>Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?</b>	7
<b>Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?</b>	21
<b>Number of contractors involved with implementation</b>	N/A
<b>Timeframe to implement</b>	6 months
<b>Start date of the program</b>	Dec 2021

### Fit to the Needs

At MetLife, there is a strong focus on cultivating the capabilities of leaders, empowering people to act, and fostering an environment where careers can thrive. This strategy was put to the test in 2021 during the height of the pandemic when seismic market shifts were occurring across corporate America. The pandemic drove persistently high call volumes through MetLife’s US Call Center, creating capacity pressure. Concurrently, the US labor market was becoming very heated. The Great Resignation was in full swing and the war for talent was intensifying. As such, MetLife was challenged in filling an increasing number of open roles. These fundamental shifts were driving elevated attrition. Voluntary attrition in MetLife’s US Call Center increased to 53% and MetLife clearly understood that swift, bold action was needed to address these talent retention issues. To solve for this, the GCSO Customer Academy was created.



Use this area to provide a description of the onboarding program at your organization. What goals were established and were they achieved?

Details:

The GCSO Customer Academy is a first-year employee engagement program focused on onboarding, training, and recognition. The goal of the program is to increase MetLife's first-year retention by capturing the hearts and minds of associates. This intentional and focused approach equips MetLife employees to provide a remarkable customer experience.

**GCSO Customer Academy**

A first-year employee engagement strategy focused on onboarding, training and recognition

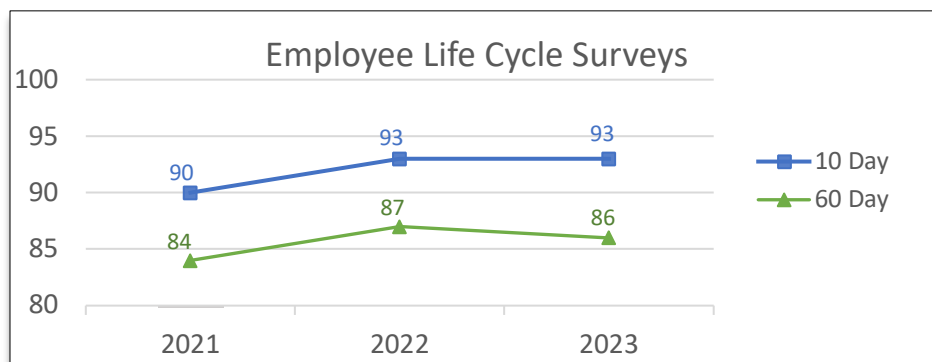
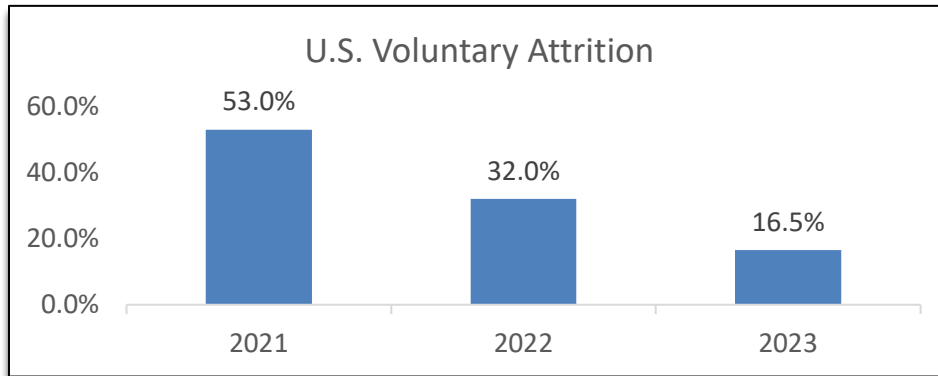
The Customer Academy will increase our first-year retention by capturing the hearts and minds of our associates

Our intentional focus will equip our employees to provide a remarkable customer experience

Key Success Metrics

- First Year Voluntary Attrition
- Employee Life Cycle Surveys

Key success metrics for the program are first-year voluntary attrition and results of employee life cycle surveys. Since the implementation of the GCSO Customer Academy MetLife's US voluntary attrition has seen strong year over year improvement. From its peak of 53% in 2021, voluntary attrition decreased by 36.5% by end of year 2023. Employee life cycle survey results increased in 2022 because of program implementation and results remained stable through 2023. The GCSO Customer Academy continues to successfully meet the key success metrics.



## Design and Delivery

To better understand attrition trends, MetLife leveraged internal HR data and discovered that 28% of new hires resigned within their first 3 months with the Company. Most of these employees left during their second month. This timing coincided with the new hires' transition from classroom training to independent work. This data provided insights critical to solving the underlying problem by making it clear that new hires required additional support during their transition from classroom training to their on-the-job responsibilities. This was accomplished by implementing streamlined Nesting programs designed to help new hires with this transition.

In addition to understanding attrition, MetLife leveraged data from New Hire Life Cycle Surveys. This Enterprise tool automatically surveys new hires across the company at Day 10 and again at Day 60. Feedback from these surveys provided the following themes that helped shape the GCSO Customer Academy:

- Opportunity to centralize equipment ordering and distribution process.



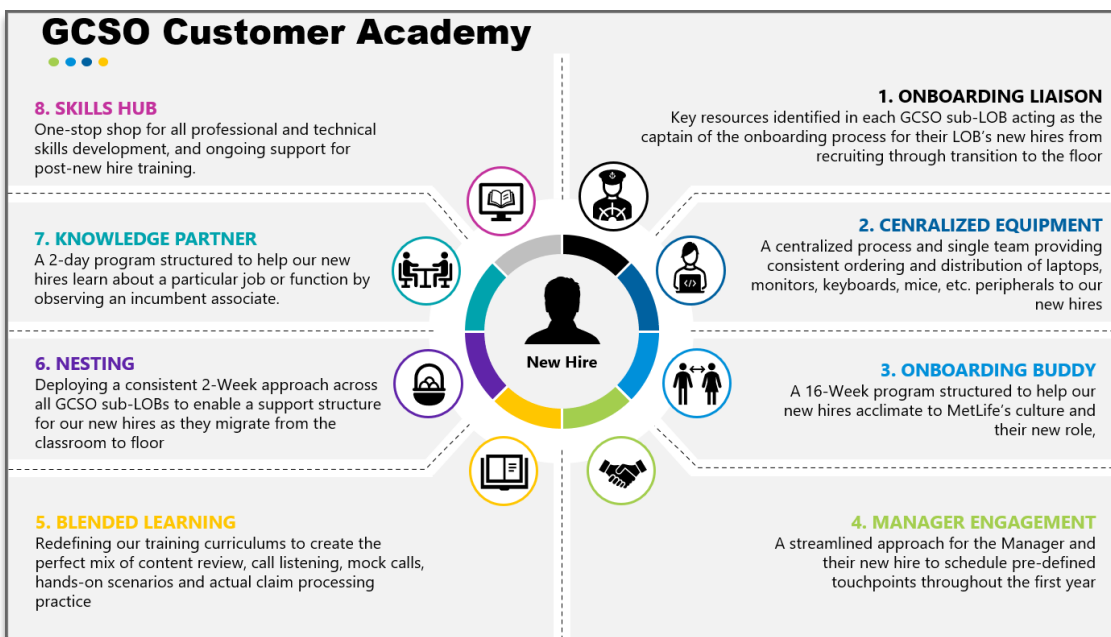
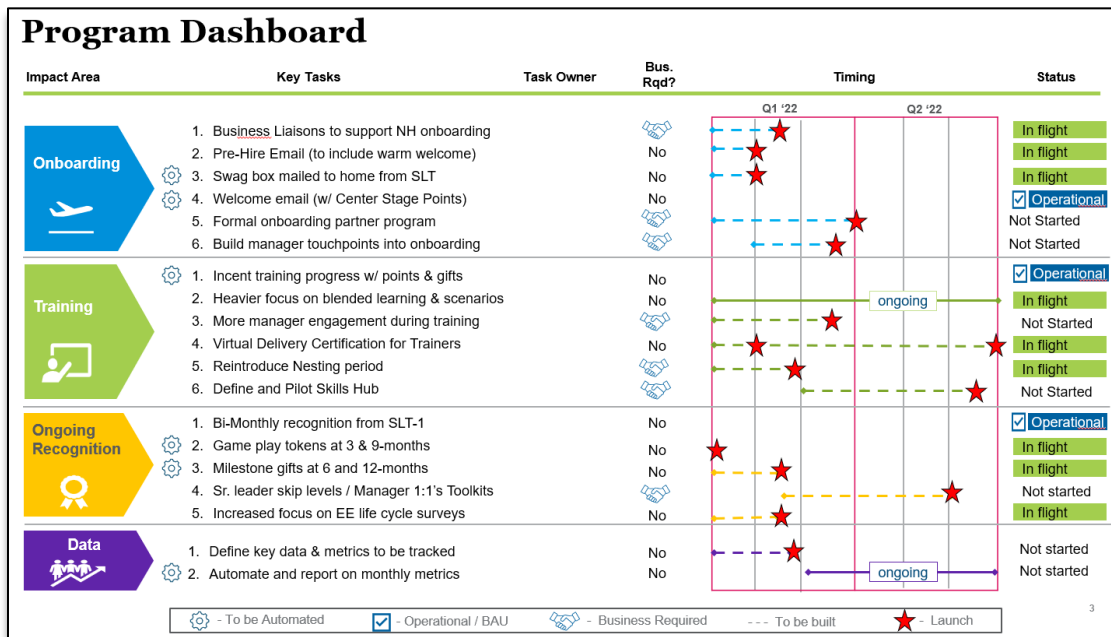
- Opportunity to evolve the new hire training curriculum through a Blended Learning approach to training and streamlined approach to job shadowing through Knowledge Partner program.
- Opportunity to provide a structured support network to new hires in the form of an Onboarding Buddy Program and Manager Engagement strategies.
- Opportunity to continue professional and technical skills development through a new hire's first year through the development of an online Skills Hub.

MetLife was shifting from an onboarding experience focused only on training to expanding onboarding to a first-year employee engagement experience. The MetLife team understood the importance of data driven actions and ensured availability of necessary reporting dashboards and regular program updates to all key stakeholders. Furthermore, the team adopted the mindset of “listening with the intent to act”. By listening to new hire feedback via the 10-day surveys, the team was able to create targeted solutions to enhance the onboarding experience. Data gathered from 60-day surveys could then be used to evaluate the effectiveness of those solutions. The MetLife team developed a comprehensive program plan to ensure all target dates and key deliverables would be met. The result was a comprehensive onboarding program focused supporting new hires through 8 key initiatives:

1. **Onboarding Liaison:** Key resources identified in each GCSO sub-line of business acting as the captain of the onboarding process for their new hires, from recruiting through transition to the floor.
2. **Centralized Equipment:** A centralized process and single team providing consistent ordering and distribution of laptops, monitors, keyboards, mice, etc. peripherals to MetLife new hires.
3. **Onboarding Buddy:** A 16-Week program structured to help new hires acclimate to MetLife's culture and their new role.
4. **Manager Engagement:** A streamlined approach for the Manager and their new hire to schedule pre-defined touchpoints throughout the first year.
5. **Blended Learning:** Redefining training curriculums to create the perfect mix of content review, call listening, mock calls, hands-on scenarios, and actual claim processing practice.
6. **Nesting:** Deploying a consistent 2-Week transition approach across all GCSO sub-lines of business to enable a support structure for MetLife new hires as they migrate from the classroom to floor.



- Knowledge Partner:** A 2-day program structured to help MetLife new hires learn about a particular job or function by observing an incumbent associate.
- Skills Hub:** One-stop shop for all professional and technical skills development, and ongoing support for post-new hire training.



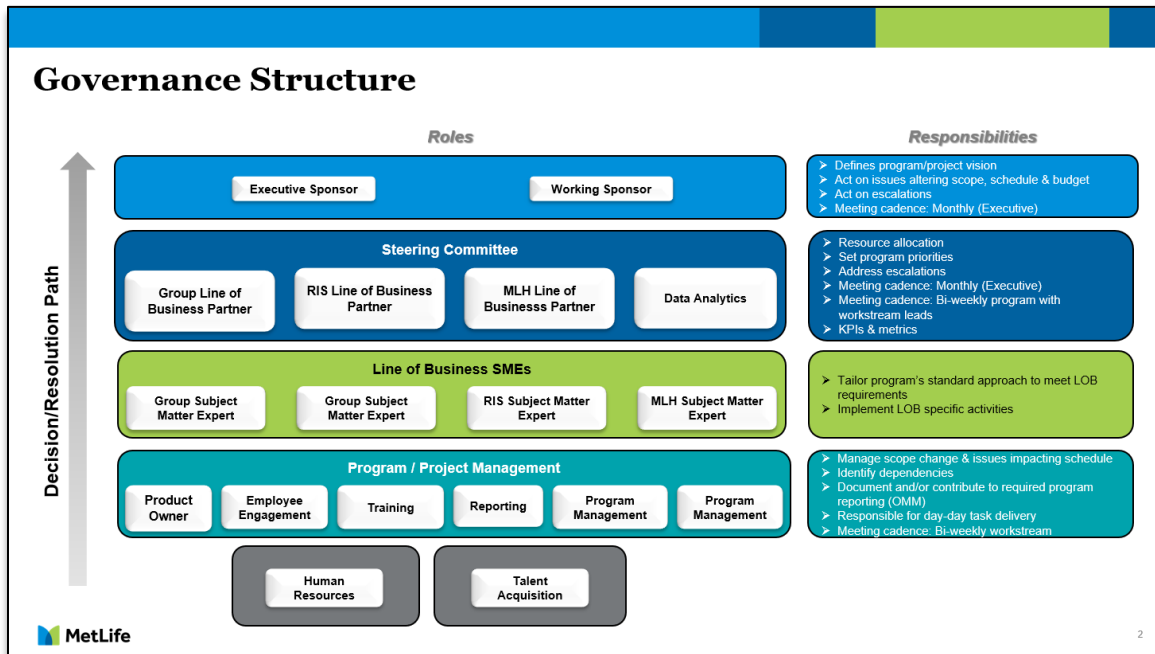


## Engagement

As with any new initiative, some challenges are to be expected. In times of crisis, there is always the temptation to look for the fast solutions rather than the right solutions. The MetLife team was determined to avoid this pitfall and remained steadfast in their pursuit to implement a data driven, sustainable, and effective solution. To ensure support of the engagement of the Customer Academy, the MetLife team created a governance structure. By defining roles and responsibilities and ensuring leadership support of the program, the MetLife team was able to mitigate potential communication gaps and ensure alignment across multiple sub-lines of business.

During the implementation phase, weekly and monthly meetings were held with key stakeholders to provide timely updates of program progress and quarterly updates were provided to all MetLife GCSO people leaders. For each Customer Academy key initiative, sub-lines of business were engaged and received training and support to ensure success. Now that the program is in a business-as-usual state, monthly results are shared across all sub-lines of business. Subject matter experts and Training Delivery leads are engaged monthly to review new hire feedback. Results are monitored closely to ensure ongoing success and to identify any new themes that require an actionable solution.

By following such a structured approach, the MetLife team can monitor new hire feedback and ensure they are receiving the resources and support they need to be successful in their role. Combined with the year over year reduction in voluntary attrition, it is clear the GCSO Customer Academy is an effective new hire onboarding program.



## Measurable Benefits

MetLife recognized the need to transform their new hire onboarding process within their Global Customer Service and Operations (GCSO) organization. The GCSO Customer Academy met this need by creating a comprehensive program with an expanded approach to onboarding.

Data analytics is a central element throughout this solution. By analyzing the data, MetLife can identify opportunities to enhance the new hire experience and limit first-year voluntary retention. Data is regularly reviewed; feedback is interpreted and actioned, and the new hire onboarding experience is subsequently improved.

Since the program launched, MetLife has seen measurable benefits:

- Year over year reduction in voluntary attrition. From its peak of 53% in 2021, voluntary attrition decreased by 36.5% by end of year 2023.
- Increase and stabilization of employee life cycle survey results.
- Streamlined processes and procedures across all sub-lines of business, ensuring a consistent and seamless experience for all new hires.

Additionally, new hires supported by the GCSO Customer Academy were asked, “how happy are you working at MetLife?”. Their feedback is below:





- “In my experience so far, MetLife is a great company to work for, and everyone has been so kind and helpful in my training process.”
- “I have had the best 3 weeks of training! I look forward to coming to work & that's a beautiful thing!”
- “I finally found a company I completely want to grow in.”
- “The amount of support that I have received so far in orientation is more than I have received during my entire time at my previous employer.”
- “I would recommend working here to everyone I know.”
- “This is the first time in a long time that I am truly happy at a job.”
- “I absolutely LOVE my job.”
- “I'm thankful to be employed with MetLife.”

## Overall

MetLife's GCSO Customer Academy is a powerful example for how to effectively problem solve. It offers universal lessons we can all benefit from:

- Start with a strong foundation to ensure a sustainable solution.
- Listen to the data and intend to act on it accordingly.
- Foster an environment where creativity and experimentation are encouraged without fear of failure.

By reviewing data and implementing creative solutions, MetLife created a comprehensive new hire onboarding program that positively impacts the new hire experience, leading to reduced voluntary attrition.



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