

# Management Checklist

## Organising the induction of new recruits

This is an excerpt from a [Chartered Management Institute](#) checklist providing practical advice and guidance enabling managers to check out how to do a range of tasks quickly and efficiently using concise, tried and tested information.

### Introduction

It makes good, as well as economic sense to help new recruits integrate as quickly as possible into their new surroundings and to become efficient and effective in their work. Failure to do so can, at the very least, lead to erratic progress, with possible hidden costs such as waste of materials and loss of customers.

A survey of over 5000 people carried out by recruitment site Reed.co.uk in 2004, found that 1 in 25 new recruits left their job shortly after starting due to a lack of proper induction. A good induction will minimise (new) employee turnover and facilitate integration and subsequent productivity.

### Definition

Induction is the process through which a new employee is integrated into the organisation, learning about its corporate culture, policies and procedures, and the specifics of their new job. Induction should not be viewed in isolation but should be treated as an extension of the selection process and the beginning of a continuing staff development programme. Rather than a mere one day introduction, induction should be planned and paced over several days or weeks.

### Action checklist

#### 1. Review the positioning of the induction

Ask yourself whether your organisational or departmental induction does the job you require it to. Ask other recent recruits for their views. Check to see if the induction achieves its objective of familiarising the new employee with the organisation and settling them into the job. Examine whether the induction is the end or the beginning of their learning with your organisation.

#### 2. Check the coverage of the induction programme

Does your induction cover:

- ✓ a tour of the premises showing and describing the facilities?
- ✓ explanations of the organisation, showing where the new employee fits in?
- ✓ clarification of terms and conditions, health and safety information?
- ✓ exposure to and explanation of the organisation's culture and values,
- ✓ other departments, products and services, and a brief organisational history?
- ✓ the strategic objectives and business planning for the next operational cycle?
- ✓ a clear description of the job / role requirements?

#### 3. Appoint a mentor

Consider asking someone about the same age and grade of the newcomer to act as a friend and advisor for the first few weeks. This will be particularly useful in a large, complex organisation or in helping to explain the myriad of detail not fully covered elsewhere. Take the utmost care to ensure that the mentor is the right person, with the time to do the job you want.

#### **4. Plan the induction and involve and inform others**

An induction programme should ideally be drawn up, but certainly authorised, by the newcomer's manager. The mentor should also be involved in the process. Other staff who will be working with the new employee should be informed of the induction programme, whether or not they will be involved. The induction plan should contain three stages: the first day or two should cover the bare essentials; the first three or four weeks should be learning by a mix of approaches; and within three to six months the newcomer should have become familiar with all departments.

Take a look through the programme checking for variety, thoroughness and a balance of learning, practising and doing. Plan too to sit through several of the sessions with the new recruit.

#### **5. Prepare the work area**

If there is a long gap between a staff member leaving and the new employee coming in, work areas and desks can tend to become dumping grounds for others' unwanted materials. A few days before the arrival, make sure that the work area is clear, clean and tidy. First impressions count for a lot in the welcome you intend to provide. Check that all relevant stationery and office equipment is to hand and in working order. Don't forget the little nuisances like an internal telephone directory, let alone a manual on how to use the phone!

#### **6. Emphasise the importance of organisation policies and procedures**

New employees must be made aware at an early stage of policies and regulations based on legislation, particularly in the area of health and safety. Other procedures based on national standards, such as ISO 9001 and Investors in People, and other schemes, such as internal employee development or mentoring, should also be introduced.

Remember that the first day is subject information overload and that the new employee will not be able to absorb or remember the level of detail which some these procedures involve. Build time into the induction schedule for reading, assimilation and questions and make sure that your new recruit will know where to find them (e.g. Intranet, departmental or personal staff manual etc.)

#### **7. Plan a balanced introduction to the work**

Whether training is done by the sitting-with-Nellie approach or by professional trainers, a mix of explanation, observation, practice and feedback is advisable. Beware of information overload. The new employee should be given some real work to do to avoid boredom and to give early opportunities for achievement.

#### **8. Clarify performance standards**

Make the performance levels you require clear from the outset. An employee cannot be expected to meet standards of which they are unaware. Where appropriate, discuss medium- and long-term needs and opportunities.

The full Management Checklist is part of a series 'CheckPoint' service offered by the Chartered Management Institute. Focusing on issues relating to people management and personal effectiveness, further information can be viewed at [www.managers.org.uk/checkpoint](http://www.managers.org.uk/checkpoint) or by calling (0)1536 207 373 to request a sample of what Checkpoint has to offer.