Induction Programmes

Ideas to stimulate ideas to refreshing your Company Induction Programme

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Introduction

This document has been prepared to outline Keystone Development's thinking about Induction Programmes in general. Each company is different and therefore each induction programme should be unique. Not all ideas included in this document will be appropriate for all businesses. As such, it simply aims to provide some ideas for consideration, and suggest possible ways forward to develop thinking.

The Purpose of Induction

In our opinion, the purpose of an induction programme is not simply to inform. A good induction programme should:

- Make the new starter feel **welcomed** to the business
- **Excite** them about the opportunities at the organisation and their future career
- Quickly **engage** and **motivate** them to give 100% commitment to their new job
- **Reassure** them that they have made the right decision to join the organisation
- Provide all the **information** that they need to make these things happen, in a way that is **meaningful** to them.

Current Best Practice

The **CIPD** has noted the following recent trends in induction training:

- Thinking beyond induction to the broader 'onboarding' process – bearing in mind the employee experience from their first contact with the organisation.
- Fewer 'chalk and talk' sessions and more multi-media presentations, or active learning tasks, for example, giving inductees a questionnaire where completion involves talking to people outside their normal scope.
- Moving away from being purely about the practicalities of an organisation to discussing culture and values.
- Using technology in the induction process. For example, an online induction and e-learning programme has been developed to introduce the culture for new HR staff in the NHS, and Tesco also uses e-learning for its annual 40,000 new recruits.
- Involving a wide range of personnel in the programme development to ensure that the content continues to match the organisation profile.
- More awareness of socialisation issues and using induction sessions for cross-function team building which build on inter-organisation communication.

It is recommended that as a first step, your current induction is reviewed against these points and ensures that supporting material 'comes to life' and remains useful beyond the first few days.

At **Keystone Development and Training Ltd**, we advocate an approach to induction that starts before, and goes way beyond day 1, involving the whole organisation in its successful delivery. We believe that effective inductions not only familiarise new employees with their company, their rights and responsibilities, but also ensures that they quickly become a part of the team, are quickly able to complete all key aspects of their role to the basic standard required.

We do this by encouraging a flexible, self-directed approach that is supported by line managers and experienced colleagues who act as buddies or mentors. This way, new employees can become trusted, competent team members in all key aspects of their role in just a few short weeks. Added bonuses of this approach are:

- Time 'off the job' is kept to a minimum for both the new starter and their manager, meaning that operational issues need not suffer.
- New starters are actively encouraged to drive their own development.
- Managers and experienced colleagues increase their skill-set by developing as coaches and mentors.
- The induction process is not reliant on a few key personnel, meaning it is much more flexible.

Sheridan Webb of Keystone Development and Training Ltd has previously designed effective, flexible induction programmes for a number of companies including:

- Kellogg's
- Warburtons
- Matalan*
- Claire's Accessories*
- Dollond & Aitchison*
- Granada Home Technology*
- Graham Builder's Merchant*

**Not under the Keystone Development name.*

Suggested Content

The CIPD has drawn up a suggested list of topics to include in an effective induction as follows:

- Orientation (physical) - describing where the facilities are.
- Orientation (organisational) - showing how the employee fits into the team and how their role fits with the organisation's strategy and goals.
- Health and safety information - this is a legal requirement.
- Explanation of terms and conditions.
- Details of the organisation's history, its products and services, its culture and values.
- A clear outline of the job/role requirements.

Through experience, Keystone Development recommends the following topics be included in an effective Induction Programme:

About The organisation

- History
- Culture
- Structure
- Products
- Locations
- Vision and Values
- Divisions
- Corporate responsibility

Policy and procedure

- HR issues
- Terms and conditions of employment
- IT policies and facilities
- Health and safety
- Security
- Legal aspects
- Payroll and pensions
- Trade Union Representation

Role Specific

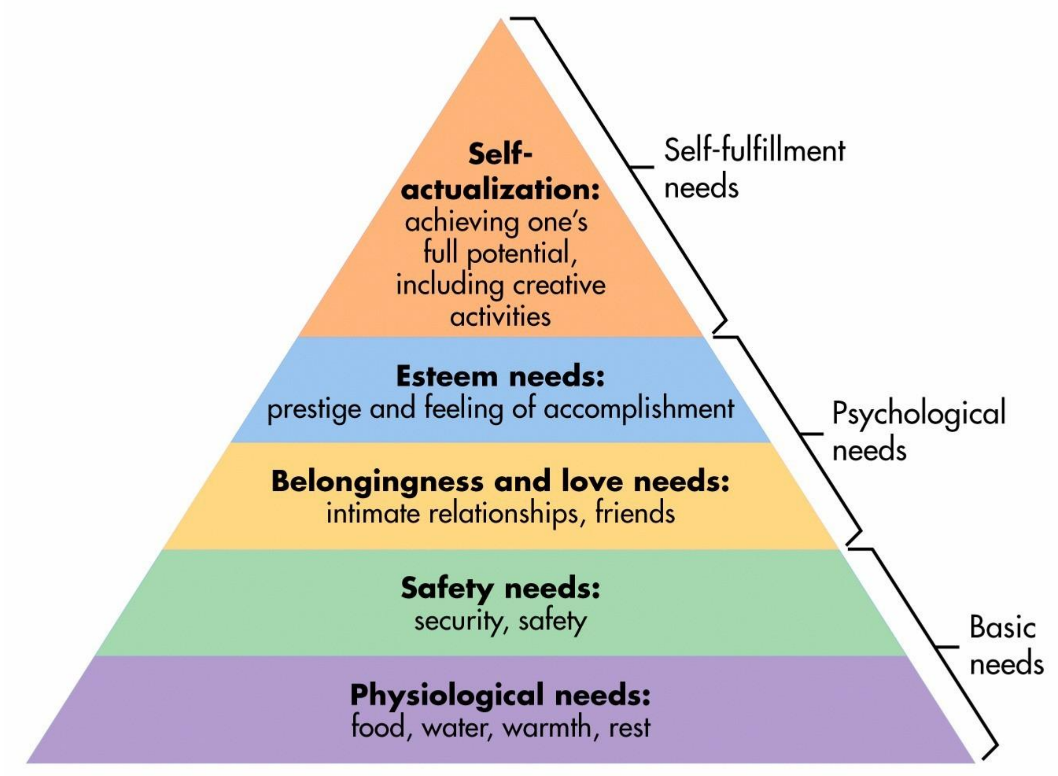
- About the department
- About your role
- Customer service
- Competences/objectives
- Core technical skills

Career Development

- Development opportunities
- Performance Management

Induction and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow may be getting on a bit as a theory, but if you look at his Hierarchy of Needs it gives an excellent blueprint for an induction programme.



The first level is all about fulfilling basic needs, and many of these should have been dealt with as part of the recruitment process. People need to be aware how much they will be paid, that they are capable of doing the job, and they will get acceptable terms and conditions. General information about the organisastion can be covered pre-start, between the new recruit accepting the offer and starting.

The second level is all about safety. All induction programmes should cover the needs included in this level. Physical safety and orientation is of course important, but so is 'emotional safety'. People need to be made aware of what they can and cannot do and what is expected of them. In short they need to know 'how we do things round here' and to operate within the limits of the business. This should be covered early on and should be more or less the same for all new starters, regardless of their role or level.

Many induction programmes will end there. However, great induction programmes will go much further, addressing level 3 and moving into level 4.

To meet level 3 needs, induction training should be interactive and inclusive. If the new starter's colleagues and managers to get involved as buddies or coaches they will immediately start to build relationships and will settle in much faster, and help them to feel that they belong.

Helping people to quickly achieve a basic level of competence in the core aspects of their job helps someone feel useful, and that they are adding value. This begins to fulfil their 'esteem' needs. From here, they should then be guided towards the usual development opportunities, performance management and career planning processes in place.

Possible Structure and Methods

To deliver the induction programme, the following broad structure is suggested below.

Pre-Start

- Make good use of the time between the new starter accepting the offer of employment, and their actual start date.
- Provide information that reinforces their decision to join the organisation and answers some of their most likely questions. Engage them by making it interactive and help them to be fully prepared for day 1.

Day 1

- A 'Formal' introduction to the business provided on the first day, regardless of role or location. This day to focus on 'important AND urgent' aspects.
- A lively, interactive half or full day workshop is run where possible.
- A clear plan is provided for Field Trainers/Line managers in other locations to deliver the same content in the same spirit to small groups or individuals.

First Week

- The new starter works with line manager/buddy to plan and complete all 'important but not urgent' aspects of induction.
- Line manager and/or buddy actively supports and coaches the new starter.

Following Weeks

- The new starter takes control of their own development and combine 'nice to know' aspects of induction with increasing focus on becoming competent in their own role.
- Line manager/Buddy still supports, but takes a more'hands-off' approach.

Sign-off

- The new starter's development record is reviewed and signed off by their line manager.
- Performance standards/objectives are agreed, and the new employee is included in the normal performance management process.

1. Pre-Start.

Much of the background information, particularly about the organisation in general, can be provided to new starters in advance. This would have the triple benefit of retaining the interest of the individual in the business, familiarising them with the company so it feels less daunting on day 1, and reducing the amount of 'information download' that has to be provided on the workshop. Making more use of pre-start information would also help to set the scene about what to expect at the organisation and manage expectations about the first few days and weeks.

Methods that could be utilised to achieve this include:

- Magazine/newsletter
- DVD
- Secure (password enabled) page on the internet
- Mini-workbook

2. Day 1

Where possible, an interactive induction workshop should be run. This would cover a number of core elements, but the main focus would be engaging and motivating people, and helping them to build relationships with other colleagues. Ideally, a half or one day workshop, run by the Head Office L&D team or Field Trainers should be run every week or fortnight, with new starters being delayed so that their first day falls on the day of the workshop.

In locations where a workshop is not practical, or where new starters are few, the individual should still have the benefit of a formal welcome to the organisation by a suitable person and be provided with the same information. This is likely to require a number of methods to be used including (but not limited to):

- Formal welcome meeting
- DVD
- e-learning
- traditional distance learning
- informal meetings with key people
- guided tours and demonstrations
- being taken to lunch
- meeting and observing their colleagues

3. The First Week

It is recommended that a buddy/mentor system is set up (if not already in place), so that the new starter is provided with a high level of support during their first few days and weeks. The buddy/mentor would share the responsibility of inducting the new starter with the line manager and HR/Field Trainers.

During the first week, the new starter will not be able to fully contribute to the team, and still has a lot to learn about the organisation and their role in it. To allow the required learning to take place, and to keep the new starter fully occupied, a task-based approach to induction works well. Here, a number of activities are specified that can be completed flexibly during the week depending upon requirements, preference or practical issues. In this case the new starter, manager and buddy agree an action plan to ensure all necessary topics/activities are prioritised and completed satisfactorily. The new starter takes responsibility for completing the activities as described, and is supported (if necessary) by their buddy, and reviewed by their line manager. In this case, the new starter would have access to experts outside of their location, as some activities may be (for example), 'Arrange a telephone call with person X, and discuss the following with them'.

4. The Following Weeks (Typically 3 to 11)

The new starter continues to complete further induction activities, but these take up less time, as the amount of day-to-day work that they are involved in should be increasing. Responsibility gradually transfers from the line manager to the individual. The manager would also move from checking progress 2 or 3 times a day, to 2 or 3 times a week. Reliance on the buddy would decrease, as the new starter begins to develop a network of colleagues who can provide support.

5. Sign Off

A formal review and sign-off should be included to ensure that all elements of induction have been completed satisfactorily, and celebrate successes achieved so far. This can take the form of a simple 1-1 meeting, or can be a 'graduation' event with others who started at the same time. This sign-off satisfies managers that basic competence has been achieved, provides evidence of what has been covered, and provides an excellent opportunity to set performance targets/objectives as well as discuss the performance review process and internal development opportunities, in detail.

Variations

It is suggested that different versions of the Induction Programme are designed to cater for different roles within the organisation. Depending on the business, there may be 3 or 4 different versions as follows:

- Head office staff
- Retail managers (if relevant)
- Retail staff (if relevant)
- Distribution staff (or regional admin centres)
- Contact Centre Staff (if relevant)

Although a proportion of the induction will be core to every role, some things are important to specific roles only, and some aspects have to be delivered in different ways.

New Manager Induction

People being recruited into management positions need a separate (additional) induction. New managers need to understand what's expected of them, what support is available to them, and how to do things properly.

People with managerial experience being recruited into a new organisation need an induction on top of the generic corporate one to help them to understand the managerial processes within their new environment. You would hope that they have been recruited because they have the necessary skills and experience, but the way they are expected to manage and report is probably quite different to their previous organisation. They need to know which forms to use when, where to find them, who to contact if… etc. They also need to know how to manage in line with the organisations Values.

Managers who are promoted from within may have a reasonable understanding of the processes, but this is HUGE assumption. They may have worked for poor managers who didn't set the right example, and even if they worked for good managers, there will be parts of the job that they were unaware of. But more than that, they will need a lot of help and guidance about the behaviours and best practice to make the transition from team player to team manager.

Managers new to an organisation would complete the standard induction and then (as part of their role specific development) would receive new manager training in addition to any technical training required. Those promoted from within would probably only need the New Manager Induction.

New managers need to be provided with the relevant **knowledge** (about policies, procedures, paperwork etc) and **skills** (e.g. having difficult conversations, completing return to work interviews, coaching people, disciplinary interviews, recruitment interviewing and so on).

This would need to be flexible to reflect the new manager's experience, needs and operational priorities (for example, conducting PDR interviews will not be urgent if they were completed a month ago, whereas if they are due in the next couple of months, this training becomes top priority). As such a **'toolkit' approach** is sensible to enable a mixture of on-line, paper-based, one-to-one and group training to be used. This would allow managers to be picked up as necessary, and cover topics based on importance and urgency to them. That said, a clear training plan would have to be agreed with their line manager and/or HR to make sure things were covered in a timely manner.

How we can help

Sheridan Webb from Keystone Development has designed flexible and robust Induction Programmes for **Kelloggs**, **Warburtons**, **Teva Pharmaceuticals, Matalan** and **Seddon**. Our typical approach is to:

Identify what you want to achieve

Review what you have already

Identify gaps

Suggest a 'pathway' through induction (including core and optional/flexible elements)

Bring together existing material/resources and use what you already have

Create additional material required including pre-start packs, employee guides and on-line content (and/or work with internal SMEs to create it)

Signpost the pathway via a booklet or on-line map

Provide guidance for managers, buddies and mentors

If necessary, train the managers, buddies and mentors

Create supporting paperwork e.g. checklists to measure progress

Link induction to your recruitment and PDR process

If you would like help with your induction programme, please contact Keystone Development and Training Ltd. Visit our website, or email Sheridan@keystonedevelopment.co.uk