

## **Induction: This is how to Teach New Employees to Swim in the Deep End of a New Environment**

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### **Introduction**

Being a part of a new company can be a very daunting and trying experience. As much as a new employee may have most the qualities and the skills needed to execute the job well, the new environment may take some time to adjust to. The first contact meetings that they may have with the new team and the management in the organisation may have a lasting impact on how that employee will experience being in that organisation. This impact may also find its way in how it influences the behaviour and the performance of that employee when they do enter into the organisation.

Many a time, managers may toss an employee into the deep end without teaching them how to swim in the waters of the new organisation. Induction takes time and patience for someone to fully understand what is expected of them. Taking a short cut on this may harm the work that is ultimately delivered. In this article, there will be a discussion on what managers can do to ensure that the employee that has been hired finds it well to be a part of the team, rather than being intimidated.

### **What is induction?**

An induction process is one where an employee is formally introduced into the organisation that they are starting in. A good induction does not only take a few days to carry out but rather can take a couple of weeks. This is because inducting a new employee into the organisation is not a once-off checklist that is done and the employee is forgotten about. As a manager, one needs to ensure that their new subordinate feels comfortable and fully understands what is expected of them. Besides, the work systems and processes need to be outlined to the new incumbent so that when they begin to work alone, they know how to do their job well.

One should be taught for a few weeks now to work on something instead of spending a day with them and every other day they come and they ask to be shown how to do something. This may become frustrating for both the person who is new to the organisation and to the manager who keeps getting asked these questions. If the new employee starts to feel like they are asking too much or they receive a negative response upon questioning, the result may be that the employee may end up keeping quiet and become intimidated to ask new questions. The danger in this is that mistakes can be made and nobody will know about it until it starts to affect the company. A feeling of trust and mutual respect must be instilled for a healthy environment.

### **Who does the induction benefit?**

Often, managers and employees at higher levels find inductions a waste of time and money because they believe that only the new incumbent will benefit from this process. This, unfortunately, is a wrong perception as the induction process benefits both parties. At face value, it does come across as though only the new employee is benefitting as they are receiving the training and the walkthroughs, among other things. What many tend to forget is that gaining trust and painting the right image of the company to a new person can be very advantageous. When someone feels trusted and seen, they are more likely to perform better and commit themselves to the work and organisation (Lau, Lam & Wen, 2014). This has very evident effects on the success of the company.

### **An effective induction process**

1. Make the employee feel welcome when they enter the organisation. This does not mean necessarily throwing a party for them but showing them that they are seen and the organisation is happy to have them as a new member of the bigger team. It is very tempting to bring someone in today and pile work on them tomorrow and expect them to work at the same speed as everyone else. While this is something that will be expected at a later stage, it must be steadily done. Allow them to have a chance to greet everyone and to at least get to know their name. If the organisation has any intra social media platforms, it would be a good idea to post there so that everyone can see that there is a new member.

Ensure that the desk at which they are going to be stationed is ready for them to sit at and feel like it was prepared for them. There is nothing that lets someone down than feeling like they were just dumped somewhere and it is clear that no preparation had been done for their coming. Even without a welcome card or note, a clean and well-prepared workspace can boost the morale of the person at hand.

1. Go through their job description and company values and vision with them so that they understand what is expected of them and what the organisation is about. Although a candidate must know what their job entails going through it with them will help them to understand better as the manager is the one explaining in his or her own words.

The company's values and vision should be clearly outlined to the new employee. During the recruitment process, a potential employee is expected to know a bit about the company that they are hoping to work for. This may be done but there are high chances that this information was crammed to get through the interview successfully. Once a person is being formally introduced to the company, they can ask the questions they were not sure about and were perhaps a bit scared to ask. Understanding what the organisation is about and what it values, encourages the incumbent to know how to behave and to shape themselves in the environment of the organisation. They should know from the beginning than for them to figure it out as the months go by as during that time, they are already shaping their views and understanding of the workplace.

1. Regular follow-ups on how the new employee is getting along are important. Regular follow-ups are not micromanaging but are a way of showing that, as the manager, you care about them and their experiences in the new environment. After the induction process has been completed, it is not ideal to leave them alone and wish them the best of luck with their work. What has been

started should be completed, inconsistency is a factor that many people do not agree with. If as the manager you started out being interested in your new employee, do not all of a sudden stop. Motivation may be lost when this happens and the employee may begin to question their position in the organisation.

In these follow-ups, it is important to find out how the employee has been getting along with their colleagues and teammates. They may be struggling but not yet feeling secure enough to voice out their opinions or grievances. Creating that safe space will give you more intel on what they are thinking and how they feel. It would also be a good idea to find out if there are some things in the organisation that they feel uncomfortable about. For example, perhaps some of the processes that are the norm in the organisation. Someone may be new to a place but you may be shocked to hear the input they may offer that no one else may have thought about. As previously stressed, the beginning days are the most important as this is the foundation on which your new employee will be built.

1. Request for feedback from your employee on how they experienced the induction process. Though nothing may change for them but may be beneficial for the next employee who comes in. with everything that is done: always find out how successful it was for the future. Here are some three and typical feedback questions that many managers ask their employees after an induction process to better the next one.
  - What is something you wish we had explained better in the first week?
  - What's one piece of advice you would give to the next person who is hired?
  - How could we have done a better job of your induction? What could be improved?

These questions are important because they provide the first-hand experience from the person who was on the receiving end of the programme. A new employee will always be a part of an organisation's survival. This is why feedback is important because the feedback will always be needed for the next new employee.

## **Conclusion**

Being part of a new organisation is not easy, even when you know that you know the work that is expected of you, socially, it is not the same. Managers need to take note of the importance of properly bringing in a new employee into an organisation. This is the foundation and can make or break a new employee. Behaviour is also largely shaped by this. Soon, hopefully, more employees can testify that they felt fully welcomed when they joined an organisation.

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