Make a positive and lasting impression with new staff members

The NRM Induction toolkit
Part 1 - Guidelines
**Summary**

This toolkit will assist you to successfully induct new employees into your organisation. Using it will ensure that the process has a positive impact on both the new employee and your organisation.

**Introduction**

If you reflect on your own experiences in the recruitment process, you’ll no doubt have seen this scenario. Organisations spending a lot of thought and energy in recruiting new staff – writing the job description, working out selection criteria, placing advertisements, short-listing applicants, interviewing and then finally selecting.

Why is it then that they often neglect to properly look after the person once they have been employed?

It seems common sense that you would do all you possibly could to ensure the new person became familiar with your organisation, felt welcomed, and was supported to become productive as soon as possible. Yet this vital step is often missing when a person first starts a job. The feeling is “phew – we’ve now got a new staff member – they can do all these tasks... and take the load off us.”

Staff induction activities provide new employees with the information they need to become productive and effective as soon as possible. They also assist with knowledge management initiatives and with building social connections within the organisation.

Rupert Murdoch in the 2008 Boyer Lectures said that the number one challenge of businesses is attracting and retaining top people. “We need good people now more than ever – with common sense, who make good judgements, see the big picture, and are able to think critically.”

Bill Gates in 1992 was quoted as saying “If you take out the top 20 people from Microsoft, it will become an unimportant company.” He understood that his business was about people, not technology. This is the same for all organisations.

‘Our people are our strongest asset’ should not be a cliché but a demonstrated fact beginning with the way you treat employees as soon as they join your organisation.

**Purpose**

The induction process should have a positive impact on both the new employee as well as the organisation.

The new employee needs to be welcomed into the organisation and quickly feel they are contributing to the success of the organisation. To do this they need adequate information and a supportive environment where questions are welcomed.

Your organisation should ensure that its investment in recruiting employees is beneficial, that new members understand the culture and expectations of the organisation, and that they become valuable permanent employees.

New employees need to understand how your organisation works and the processes involved. The induction is useful in familiarising them with a new or different way of working. By providing an overview of the whole organisation, the induction process can assist with eliminating the ‘silos’ that can occur in an organisation.

This toolkit will assist managers to successfully induct new employees into your organisation.
Goals of the Induction Program:

- Provide support and assistance to new staff members
- Ensure early socialisation of new employee – with organisation and team members
- Improve new employees ability to work effectively and efficiently
- Integrate the new employee into your culture, your ethics, your structure and your team
- Build effective relationships and loyalty
- Ensure safety of all employees
- Organise training schedule
- Formalise knowledge transfer
- Increase likelihood of retention of staff

First impressions count
A new employee will make judgements about the organisation on the first day and in the first two to three months. It is critical that the induction process is professional, welcoming, informative and supportive.

New employees often complain about information overload and the expectation to remember a lot of new people and their roles. A staged approach is suggested where induction consists of:

- written materials
- face-to-face meetings
- familiarisation with systems, and
- the assignment of a buddy or mentor to assist with integrating into the organisation.

One of the main frustrations of a new employee is being unsure who to contact when they have a question. The induction process is particularly important in addressing this issue by introducing new employees to key people in the organisation and providing a buddy or mentor to assist with understanding who and when to contact various people.

New employees want to become engaged in meaningful work early in their new role. Depending on the level of engagement, this may occur individually or with someone else involved in the same or similar project.

It is important that new employees quickly gain a sense of belonging and develop social networks within the organisation. This can occur through a ‘Welcome Party’ similar to the traditional ‘Farewell Party’; or at least introductions at morning tea to lessen feelings of isolation.

Of course there are also frustrations for the ‘line manager’ responsible for the induction process. Try to avoid being overwhelmed by the task. Look for opportunities to delegate or share specific parts of the induction process. Remember that exposure to a range of people across your organisation will assist the new staff member in building her networks and understanding of the role and functions of her new organisation.
**Getting prepared**

Being ready to really welcome an employee into your organisation takes time and a lot of work. With these planning tools, this task can become a stepwise process to ensure you have all aspects covered, without either you or the new employee becoming overloaded.

The following section outlines the tasks required during the induction process. The NRM Induction Checklist provides you with a structured list of activities to help you and your colleagues prepare.

The table below shows the key tasks required over the first three months of the induction period.

<table>
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<th>Induction Stage</th>
<th>Steps Required</th>
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| Prestart        | • Provide background information on organisation  
|                 | • Logistical arrangements made - including provision of equipment |
| Day 1           | • Familiarisation with location & facilities  
|                 | • Background regarding role, organisational matters & administrative forms  
|                 | • Staff introductions & buddy assigned |
| Week 1          | • Role, expectations & initial tasks discussed  
|                 | • Workplace, HR requirements & compliance training identified  
|                 | • Introductions done & networks identified |
| Month 1         | • Workplans formulated with agreed performance indicators  
|                 | • Compliance training organised or undertaken  
|                 | • Review of expectations & performance |
| Month 3         | • Discuss performance leading to completion of probationary period  
|                 | • Workplan review  
|                 | • Induction feedback |
**Induction timeline in detail**

The steps in the induction process are described below. Remember that there is also an Induction Checklist template that’s part of this kit. It’s in MS Word format to enable you to adapt it to suit your needs. An ‘Employee details’ template (in MS Word format) also comes with this kit.

**Prior to new employee arriving (Prestart):**
- Provide background information about the organisation – eg mission, vision, goals, key strategies, annual report, strategic plan, organisational chart
- Provide information on where to go and who to ask for on the first day – including where to park, and any other information to assist a smooth transition into the organisation – eg dress code
- Ensure that an appropriate desk/space is prepared for new employee – including computer, telephone, internet / email, stationery.
- Plan Week One for new employee – including induction procedures, meeting key people, key responsibilities, and some tasks.

**Day One – organised by line manager**
- Familiarise the new employee with the building – their desk, meeting spaces, kitchen, toilets, equipment (printers, photocopiers, stationery) – and the offices of key people.
- Ensure administrative forms are understood and completed
- Provide background to their position – including expectations, contacts, reporting requirements, current status (if appropriate)
- Provide information on the organisational structure – key people and roles
- Introduce new employee to immediate work team – ensure some social time at morning/afternoon tea to assist with assimilation into the organisation.
- Assign a ‘buddy’ to support the induction.
- Provide contact list of immediate work team with who to contact for queries
- Provide time for the new employee to familiarise themselves with their work environment – eg check that their computer works, that they can access their email account, that passwords work, they can get onto internal websites, download key documents

**Week One**
- Discuss the role of the new employee and how this contributes to the organisations goals.
- Agree on initial tasks to be undertaken by the new employee – standards and reporting
- Provide information on workplace requirements – Code of Ethics and Conduct, use of equipment, communication guidelines, Policies and Procedures manual.
- Organise any necessary compliance-based training – eg Occupational Safety and Health, Senior First Aid, Defensive Driving
- Outline relationship with funding bodies – and responsibilities
- Ensure Human Resource topics are covered – leave entitlements, employment conditions, probationary period, pay details, superannuation, use of motor vehicles, mobile phones
- Ensure new employee has no issues with equipment, passwords, access, email and internet access
- Ensure new employee has met appropriate people and introduced to other teams
End of first month
- Work plans are finalised with agreed performance indicators
- Training - Occupational Safety and Health training has been undertaken or is organised; other training organised – eg Indigenous Cultural Awareness, Defensive Driving
- Discuss employees perceptions of the first month – does the role meet their expectations, do they have any ideas for improvement,
- Ensure all equipment is working – address any frustrations
- Discuss performance expectations – progress during probationary period
- Allow time for any other topics to arise

End of three months
- Discuss performance – based on agreed work plans
- Acknowledge successful completion of probationary period (if appropriate)
- Assess the induction process – obtain feedback
- Develop future work plans with agreed performance indicators

Important documents
- Employee details
- Tax Declaration Form
- Superannuation details
- Payroll details
- Job Description Form
- Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policies
- WA Public Sector Code of Ethics
- Code of Conduct
- HR Forms – leave, training, reimbursement, assets, timesheets

Other documents
- Organisational chart
- Organisation contacts – name, role, phone, email
- Key regional contacts -
- Useful websites
- Acronyms demystified
- Organisation Strategic Plan
- Organisation Annual Report
- Funding bodies – information
- Policies and Procedures Manual

Follow-up resources
Reference material related to each of the skill development toolkits (Induction; Skill development and Mentoring) will be available through the State NRM website, [www.nrm.wa.gov.au](http://www.nrm.wa.gov.au)  NRM project officers will also have access to an online forum where they’ll be able to share ideas, develop networks, seek information and exchange resources.

The site will also include a Training Calendar and downloads covering all the core skills needed for your staff’s development. It also includes resources to assist development of capacity building programs as well as tips for governance for community groups.

There’s also a short guide to assist you and your staff to put your practical experiences to ongoing use - through using structure reflection and debrief processes. The guide steps through the process and gives several examples of how it can be applied in the field as well as with work teams.
Acknowledgements

This project was funded by the Australian Government and the Government of Western Australia.

Special thanks goes to Cathy Lyons of the State NRM Office and Mike Miller (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry) for their support, enthusiasm, vision, persistence and drive throughout the project.

Our thanks also goes to the following groups and organisations whose staff provided input into the kits:

- Avon Catchment Council
- Blackwood Basin Group
- Cape to Cape Catchments Group
- Department of Agriculture & Food
- Department of Environment & Conservation
- Department of Water
- Geocatch
- Leschenault Catchment Council
- Northern Agricultural Catchments Council
- Peel-Harvey Catchment Council
- Perth NRM
- Rangelands NRM
- South Coast NRM
- South West Catchments Council
- WA Local Government Association
- Warren Catchments Council

Disclaimer.

This document is the result of information compiled through meetings and surveys with stakeholders involved in the project, complemented by analysis of a range of publications and documentation. No legal responsibility can be accepted by the authors for any other person acting on information contained in the document.

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