

Development of an Induction Programme for the New Recruits of Sales & Marketing Department

Siriwardena LC¹
Francisco GS²

ABSTRACT

This research was done with respect to a leading shipping company in Colombo 02, whose primary business is being the agent in both Sri Lanka and Maldives for a world renowned German shipping line. The research was carried out to develop an induction programme for the new recruits of sales & marketing department of the company to integrate them into the performance cycle in the shortest possible time. Lack of a proper induction programme at the company was seen as a barrier for the efficiency of the new recruits. The programme was produced in a combination of views of the current employees of the company, the HR professionals of the group where the company is a subsidiary and considering the necessary areas that must come under a standard induction programme. The proposed induction programme consists of general induction training, a mandatory induction training, job induction training, training evaluation and proposed time frames for each activity. The research suggests a checklist of all the activities under each of the above components to be given to the trainee so that he will not miss any of the contents of the whole programme.

KEYWORDS: Induction, Training programmes, Orientation, Human Resources, New Recruits.

INTRODUCTION

Simply, induction (also known as orientation) could be defined as a formal process of familiarizing new employees with the organization, their jobs, and their work units.

The induction is necessary not only when joining new companies but also when moving from one department into another. In both cases people faces some sort of a culture shock. Speaking broadly, joining a new company or a new work unit is not much different from visiting a foreign country. Either the person has to be told about the new customs or else he has to learn by himself by a process of trial and error. The purpose of an effective induction programme is to help ease the impact of this shock.

Another fact that makes an orientation program important is that the experiences of a worker during his initial period of work can have a major impact in his career. During this period the new employee stands on the 'boundary' of the organization – no longer an outsider but still not wholly embraced by the existing employees. This causes a stress and the new trainee may try to reduce this level of stress by trying to familiarize with the organization as quickly as possible. As a result, during this period a trainee is more receptive to cues from the organizational environment than other times in his career. Cues to proper behaviour may come from a variety of sources, for example;

- ~ Vision & mission of the organization
- ~ Official literature of the organization
- ~ Examples set by senior people
- ~ Formal instructions given by senior people

- ~ Examples given by peers
- ~ Rewards and punishments that follow from the employees' efforts
- ~ Response to the employees' ideas
- ~ Degree of challenge in the assignments the employee receives

By offering systematic induction programmes, organizations expect to achieve the following objectives:

- Better alignment of employees' attitudes, views, etc., along with the values of the company
- Reduction of the new employees' anxiety
- Increased cooperation between the employees of line and staff
- Improved employee morale
- Facilitation of learning
- Lower recruiting and training costs
- Increased productivity
- Lower turnover

LITERATURE

Induction Training is absolutely vital for new recruits. A Good induction training ensures new starters are retained, and then settled in quickly and happily to a productive role. Induction training is more than skills training. It's about the basics that seasons the employees.

Professionally organized and delivered induction training is the new employees' first proper impression of the organization, so it's also an excellent opportunity to reinforce their decision to come and work for the organization.

¹Graduate, Department of Mathematical Sciences, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

²Head, Department of Mathematical Sciences, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW RECRUITS OF SALES & MARKETING DEPARTMENT

Proper induction training is increasingly a legal requirement. Employers have a formal duty to provide new employees with all relevant information and training relating to health and safety in particular.

Creating and issuing a suitable induction plan for each new starter will help him do their job better and quicker, and with less dependence on your time in future. Employees who are not properly inducted need a lot more looking after and so failing to provide good induction training can be a costly mistake.

The learning and development can be achieved through very many different methods depending on the individuals and the groups. But remember that induction training by its nature requires a lot more hand-holding than other types of training.

And while not strictly part of the induction training stage, it's also helpful to refer to and discuss personal strengths and personal development wishes and aspirations, so that people see they are valued as individuals with their own unique potential, rather than just being a name and a function. This is part of making the job more meaningful for people - making people feel special and valued - and the sooner this can be done the better.

As with any type of training, it is vital to review and seek feedback after induction training.

It is particularly important to conduct exit interviews with any new starters who leave the organization during or soon after completing their induction training.

Seek feedback also from the staff who help provide the induction training for new starters, and always give your own positive feedback, constructive suggestions, and thanks, to all those involved in this vital process.

METHODOLOGY

The research was designed with a number of data collection methods such as interview, discussions, observations, questionnaires, and secondary data, etc. Since a combination of these methods is used the solution could be considered more dependable.

Since the number of individuals at the Sales and Marketing Department was not sufficient to carry out a dependable survey, for the dependability, data were collected from both the Marketing Department as well as from the Operations Department.

The data collection was done in a few stages. First, a preliminary interviewing was done to ascertain whether the employees prefer to have an orientation programme for the new recruits. Apart from the employees, such interviewing was carried out with the management and top management as well. In the second stage, the employees or to be more precise - the considered sample was both interviewed and was issued questionnaires. The purpose was to check whether they have properly oriented to the organization apart from the job activities aspect and also to verify what to include in the induction programme that is intended to create. The questionnaire included two

parts. It included fifteen multiple choice questions and two writing questions. The contents of the questionnaires were prepared in a manner that they covered the essential areas of a standard induction programme. The ideas and views of the professionals of the group human resource division were also gathered. For that two separate interviews were carried out with two human resource professionals of the Group HR. One was carried out with the HR manager for shipping sector. In that discussion the theoretical concepts and his experiences were discussed. The other interview was carried out with the Group General Manager of Human Resources. In that interview as well, similar questions were raised. In those two interviews, their views on developing an induction programme were gathered.

The final solution was developed considering the results of the data analysis, views of the HR professionals and the essential areas that must come under a proper induction programme.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Unlike in most researches, the data collected for this research were the employees' ideas, views and attitudes, etc. towards developing an induction programme to the new recruits of the Sales and marketing department of the company.

Responses for the minor interviews conducted with the executives of the Marketing Department proved to be positive. They accepted that a proper orientation programme would increase and strengthen the integrity of new employees to the company environment.

The questionnaires were given to thirty employees though few of them are even not directly related to the Marketing department. The questionnaires were distributed outside the Marketing department as well to increase the dependability of the responses. The weights given to the five responses of each question were as follows:

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Strongly agree	10
Agree	7.5
Neither agree nor disagree	5
Disagree	2.5
Strongly disagree	0

Each question was considered separately. The total weight for each question was calculated. Then the amount was divided by the total number of employees or the number of correspondence and the average weight was calculated. For that average necessary priority was given when developing the induction programme. When giving priority, the fact whether the question was positive type or negative type was considered. In addition, as described previously as well, each question represented a certain area of

potential topic of the intended programme. That was also considered in giving priority for each topic of the programme.

Mean test:

$$\text{Average weights for question No. 01} = \frac{\text{Total weight for question No. 01}}{\text{Total number of responses}}$$

The above formula was used to calculate the average for all the questions.

When analyzed the results were as follows:

Q ⁿ No.	Avg. weight	Q ⁿ No.	Avg. weight
01	7	09	3
02	2.75	10	1.5
03	8.5	11	2.25
04	1.25	12	7.5
05	4.25	13	6.75
06	3.25	14	5.25
07	8.75	15	3.25
08	5.41		

In addition to the essential areas that must come under the induction programme, these results were considered when developing it. Furthermore, the discussions carried out with the HR professionals of the Group were also considered when developing the programme. The developed induction programme was a combination of the conclusions of those discussions and the results of the analysis of the collected data.

THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following is the induction programme developed for the new recruits of the Sales and Marketing Department to integrate them into the performance cycle in the shortest possible time. The programme was developed considering the essential areas that must come in such a programme and also with the results of the data analysis. The views of HR professionals were also used in developing this. The programme should be associated with the induction training checklist given to the trainee.

The induction training programme should include four basic elements as mentioned below.

- ~ **General induction** relating to the organization, including vision & mission, values and philosophy as well as structure and history, etc
- ~ **Mandatory induction** relating to health and safety and other essential or legal areas
- ~ **Job induction** relating to the role that the new starter will be performing

- ~ **Other basic skills training** relating to the efficiency of the new trainee in his career
- ~ **Induction training evaluation** entailing confirmation of understanding and feedback about the quality and response to the training

Induction Activities: Pre Arrival to Employment

In this programme it is recommended that the induction activities to be started before the new entrant actually starts working.

Before the final interview (Optional) – If the trainee is to be selected by a sequence of interviews, final candidates can be offered a tour to places where they will have to keep in touch once they have been selected to the post. For an example a marketing executive has to keep a good rapport with container yards. So, as an indirect/ pre employment orientation he could be accompanied to such a place.

The following activities could be performed a week or so before the date of employment. They are considered to be an indirect induction process that is indirectly orienting to the environment which is not through a formal process.

- ~ Giving the description of position
- ~ Issuing the appointment letter
- ~ Signing the contract of employment (this could be done even after assigning duties, but this way also is possible)
- ~ Calling the new entrant to answer his any outstanding or new questions.

Induction Activities: On Arrival to Employment

A good approach to carry out the programme is to issue the trainee a checklist including all the topics of the programme, to tick each topic once it is finished. By this way the trainee would not miss any of the contents in the programme. It also should have the option to include the date of each topic covered, under whose supervision, what was the delivery method, etc. By this method it is also convenient to cross check the progress of the trainee.

The first task of the programme should be to appoint a work mentor or a sponsor (buddy) for the new entrant in order for him to have a point of contact for any advice and support that may be required.

The research suggests offering the new trainee a checklist containing everything in the programme so that he will not miss any of its contents even by chance. The proposed checklist is as follows.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW RECRUITS OF SALES & MARKETING DEPARTMENT

Ref. No.	Induction Checklist	Mentor	When/Where	Expected time-frame	Evaluation
	General induction				
	Introducing to all the employees of the company	Sp/ Sec		1 st day	
	The geography of the building	Sp		1 st day	
	Address and greeting	HR		1 st day	
	Dress code/ Attire	HR		1 st day	
	Organizational history and background overview	MD/HR		1 st day	
	Values	HR		2 nd day	
	Ethics and philosophy	HR		2 nd day	
	Lunch with superiors	MD/D/MM/Sp		1 st - 2 nd week	
	The mission statement	HR		2 nd day	
	Organizational structure	Sp		2 nd day	
	Pay	Sp		3 rd week	
	Parking facilities	Sp		1 st day	
	Office hours	Sp		1 st day	
	Data protection	Sp		4 th day	
	Discipline and conduct	HR		2 nd -3 rd week	
	Dealing with gifts and presents	HR		2 nd -3 rd week	
	Leaves, absenteeism and lateness	HR		2 nd -3 rd week	
	Mandatory induction				
	Fire fighting	HR		3 rd week	
	Accident reporting	HR		3 rd week	
	Job training				
	Local department structure	MM/Sp		1 st day	
	Departmental functions and aims	MM/D		1 st day	
	Definitions, jargons, terminology used in the dept.	MM/Sp		1 st week	
	Use, care & issue of tools & equipments	Sp		1 st - 3 rd week	
	Job description	MM		1 st week	
	Introduction to the computer based shipping system	MM & /Sp		4 th dd - 3 rd wk	
	Job activities	Sp		2 nd week	
	Performance appraisal	HR		3 rd week	
	Introduction to all other departmental activities	Dep. Heads		2 nd -3 rd week	
	Issuing stationary	Sec		2 nd week	
	Leaving the office last	Sp		2 nd week	
	Other basic skills				
	Telephone conversation skills	HR		2 nd week	
	Orienting to 5S concepts	HR		3 rd week	

Table 1.0 Induction training Checklist to be given to the trainee

The abbreviations in the 'Mentor' column, means the following:

Sp - Sponsor appointed from the local department
Sec - Company Secretary

HR - A representative from the Group HR division

MD - Managing Director

D - Marketing Director

MM - Marketing Manager

Induction Training Evaluation

The induction training evaluation should be two fold.

As one approach, the evaluation should be on-going one from time to time during the induction training. The mentor who undertook the relevant category can act as the evaluator. So, the representative

from the HR division, department head and even the appointed mentor can evaluate the progress. From the areas covered so far, the evaluator can cross check how much the trainee has seized. By the responses the evaluator can make slight alterations in the contents of the programme and in the delivery methods.

At the same time a further training needs assessment can be done. The evaluator can ask the trainee what additional areas he wants to follow.

The second approach is that the evaluation being done at the end of the induction programme. At this point also the evaluator can assess how much the trainee has grabbed. It also reflects how useful the programme was. The evaluation will suggest what areas the next induction programme should contain, what areas to be more stressed, and what areas that are not much significant, etc.

CONCLUSION

The importance of a proper induction programme for any type of employees is a universally accepted requirement. Most companies do the mistake of ignoring this importance. The cost of such a mistake can be very high. Sometimes things may not be worse or complicated, but there is always a risk. So every company must provide their new employees a proper induction.

The trainee may be a school leaver, a fresh graduate or even an experienced person, but regardless of the experience, knowledge and even the position he is to employ, there must be an induction programme.

At the same time the sponsor who is to guide the new trainee should be carefully selected. He must have experience in the company, must be known for wishing others' success, must be enthusiastic and must have good communication skills.

The duration of the induction programme should be limited to three weeks. It should not be allowed to drag into a month. Depending on the absorbing level and the learning style of the trainee, the time may vary. Sooner the programme ends it is better. But the management should make sure not to put additional pressure on the trainee, or should overload the trainee with too much of information, since there is always a limit in catching things.

Limitations

The time the researcher had to discuss with the marketing individuals of the company was limited due to the fact that they were always quite busy.

For convenience, the sample selected was the Sales & Marketing Department.

Since the number of individuals in the Sales and Marketing Department was not sufficient to carry out a dependable survey, employees from the Operations Department were also contacted.

Since an in depth study of the computer system used by the company is not carried out, the amount that was included in the job induction section was limited. But on the other hand it cannot be considered a limitation because in an induction programme mostly things outside the job activities are considered as employees somehow gather a sufficient knowledge about the job activities.

REFERENCES

Text Books

- George Bohlander and Scott Snell, (2003). *Managing Human Resources*, 13th Edition, Thompson – South Western, New York.
- Wayne F. Cascio, (2004). *Managing Human Resources*, 6th Edition, Tata McGraw Hill – Publications Company Ltd., London.

Online Materials

- (2001), induction Training and Induction Checklist, (<http://www.businessballs.com/inductiontrainingchecklist.html>), Accessed on 10th December, 2008.
- (2003), Employee induction, (www.bizhelp24.com/employment-and-personal-development/employee-induction-2.html), Accessed on 11th December, 2008.

Faculty of Applied Sciences

Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
Kuliyapitiya

ISBN 978 - 955 - 8746 - 60 - 1

National Digitization Project

National Science Foundation

Institute : Wayamba University of Sri Lanka (WUSL)

1. Place of Scanning : Makandura Library, WUSL

2. Date Scanned : 2017 - 04 - 01

3. Name of Digitizing Company : Sanje (Private) Ltd, No 435/16, Kottawa Rd,
Hokandara North, Arangala, Hokandara

4. Scanning Officer

Name : Namal Sumanasinghe

Signature : Namal Sumanasinghe

Certification of Scanning

I hereby certify that the scanning of this document was carried out under my supervision, according to the norms and standards of digital scanning accurately, also keeping with the originality of the original document to be accepted in a court of law.

Certifying Officer

Designation : Senior Assistant Librarian

Name : DGAS Malkanthi

Signature : Sumanasinghe

Date : 01 - 04 - 2017

“This document/publication was digitized under National Digitization Project of the National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka”