Training induction trainers

Unit 4

◪ Description

There are ten tools in this unit:

4a Suggested programme for training induction trainers: a one-day training programme for all those individuals who are likely to be involved in induction training.

4b Suggested programme for training 'buddies': a half-day training programme for members of staff who have been designated as 'buddies' for new employees.

4c Induction Code of Practice for trainers: a set of standards for those who will be involved in inducting new members of staff.

4d Induction Code of Practice for trainers – pro forma: enables you to create a customised Code of Practice for trainers.

4e Induction Code of Practice for 'buddies': a set of guidelines for those who will be undertaking the 'buddy' role.

4f Induction Code of Practice for 'buddies' – pro forma: enables you to create a customised Code of Practice for 'buddies'.

4g 'The Benefits of Induction'– discussion brief: the basis of an exercise designed to encourage commitment from induction trainers and 'buddies', by examining (a) the benefits of induction and (b) the problems that may arise when induction has not been carried out effectively.

4h 'The Benefits of Induction' – feedback prompt: some points of feedback that trainers may wish to encourage in order to ensure that participants have a full understanding of the benefits of good induction training and the likely outcomes if it is not given due emphasis.

4i 'Thinking back' – discussion brief: the basis of an exercise designed to get induction trainers or 'buddies' to put themselves in the shoes of the newcomer, and to consider how they might need to approach induction, given the natural apprehension of their trainees.

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The Tools

a Programme for training trainers

b Programme for training 'buddies'

c Code of Practice for trainers

f Code of Practice for trainers – pro forma

e Code of Practice for 'buddies'

f Code of Practice for 'buddies' – pro forma

g 'Benefits of induction' – discussion brief

h 'Benefits of induction' – feedback prompt

i 'Thinking back' – discussion brief

j 'Thinking back' – feedback prompt

4j 'Thinking back' – feedback prompt: suggests some points of feedback that trainers may wish to encourage in order to ensure that participants have a full understanding of the needs of the induction trainee.

◨ Purpose

These tools are designed to assist Human Resources/Training Departments to provide training interventions that will enlist the commitment and support of all those who will be involved at the sharp end of induction training.

When to use the tools

Use **Tool 4a** when planning a training programme for managers, team leaders and other staff who will be involved in delivering induction training. This tool will have particular relevance if your organisation is about to embark upon a more formal or detailed approach to induction. Ideally, all potential induction trainers will be asked to attend a training event, so that a consistent approach can be introduced and subsequently maintained.

Tool 4b is for your use when planning a training programme for members of staff who have been designated as 'buddies' for new employees. This tool will be relevant if your organisation has not used the 'buddy' system before, or if it has taken a very informal approach to this role.

Use **Tools 4c** and **4d** when defining the responsibilities of induction trainers and planning any training they will need before undertaking these responsibilities.

Tools 4e and **4f** can be used when defining the responsibilities involved in the 'buddy' role and planning appropriate training.

You can use **Tool 4g** when conducting 'The aims and benefits of induction training' session on the training programmes for induction trainers and 'buddies'. It may also be used at a meeting held to 'sell' the benefits of induction to managers, team leaders and other staff who will be involved in the induction process.

Tool 4h can be used when handling the feedback generated by **Tool 4g**.

You may use **Tool 4i** when conducting 'The induction trainee' session on the training programmes for induction trainers and 'buddies', or at a session designed to develop training competence in the context of induction.

Use **Tool 4j** when handling the feedback generated by **Tool 4i**.

◪ Background

Training induction trainers

Although it is highly likely that managers, team leaders and others who might be involved in dealing with new members of staff will be trained trainers, it is important that they are aware of the unique demands of induction training.

Gaining commitment

Not every potential induction trainer feels enthusiastic about the process or is committed to it. For all training interventions it is useful to spend time establishing the tangible benefits of taking care of new staff adequately, examining also how costly a failure to induct can be. This may be one way of converting the 'die-hards' who feel that they cannot commit to this activity.

Understanding the learner

Induction trainers also need to understand the special situation in which an induction training programme takes place. Although all trainers will have been newcomers themselves at some point, the anxieties they felt when they started a new job can easily be forgotten. The usual uncertainties are added to by a fear of looking foolish and inexperienced. The most capable people can falter over the simplest learning tasks in such a situation.
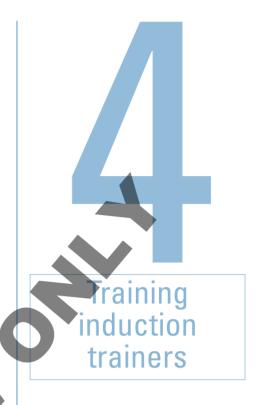
To this end, induction trainers need to revisit some of their own experiences, together with those of their colleagues, so that they can empathise with induction trainees and prepare to deal with them sensitively and competently.

Training methods

An induction programme is likely to have greater impact if it is shared between managers and subject specialists. It usually contains a wide variety of topics, each of which benefits from a particular training approach. It is important, therefore, that induction trainers make informed decisions about who can deliver what and how, to their new members of staff. In addition to considering the options available to them, induction trainers need to familiarise themselves with all induction resources and materials.

Follow-up

The knowledge and understanding gained during induction training will need to be transferred to the workplace if new employees are to feel comfortable and confident as they try to behave according to the codes and standards that have been presented to them. Newcomers must recognise how what they have learned applies to the various situations they can find themselves in. Trainers will need to understand how they can support induction trainees so that they use

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their resource materials and ask the right questions when they need help.

Evaluation

It is important to evaluate induction training from all perspectives to ensure that it can be shown to be a worthwhile activity that can be continuously improved. Evaluation will take place at several levels, from the trainee's first impressions through to a strategic benefits analysis, and induction trainers will need to know what they must do to assist in this process.

Training 'buddies'

The notion of asking a member of the new starter's peer group to look after them, take them to breaks and help them become involved in the social aspects of the organisation is far from new. Many newcomers have been relieved to find that they will not be left floundering over what to do in the staff restaurant, or wondering quite how the social conventions work. No doubt, however, just as many newcomers have suffered at the hands of demotivated cynics, who have done little more than show some clever ways to get around rules and conventions and have upset their new colleagues with frightening tales of poor practice and evil managers.

The importance of this role has now become recognised to the extent that many organisations make it a formal designation, and reward those who undertake the responsibility. It is seen as a developmental opportunity for those who do it and it may even be a prerequisite for those who intend to progress into team-leadership or supervisory roles.

There is a natural tendency to select experienced staff as 'buddies', and certainly such employees will possess a degree of self-assurance. Nevertheless, capable short-serving employees, who remember the strains of the induction period more vividly may be equally good choices. The best option is to choose staff from as wide a cross-section as possible and so create a pool of 'buddies', one of whom will suit the new starter.

'Buddy' training will need to focus upon practical, non-theoretical issues and be presented in a short, sharp format to engage maximum interest. You can adapt the agenda shown in Tool 4a to produce a relevant one-day training programme for induction trainers.

◪ How to use the tools

The agenda shown in **Tool 4b** can be adapted to produce a relevant half-day training programme for members of staff who have been designated as 'buddies'.

Tool 4c lays out the activities that induction trainers will need to undertake and therefore provides some focus for the training they receive themselves. This Code can be included in the resource material for the induction trainers' own training programme.

Use the pro forma given in **Tool 4d** to customise and update a relevant Code of Practice for the induction trainers in your organisation.

Tool 4e gives some guidance on how the 'buddy' role should be carried out and should therefore provide some focus for the training that they receive. This Code can be included in the resource material for the 'buddy' training programme.

Use the pro forma given in **Tool 4f** to customise and update a relevant Code of Practice for the members of staff in your organisation who have been designated as 'buddies'.

You can use **Tool 4g** as part of the programmes outlined, as a discussion session to emphasise the benefits of induction training.

Divide larger groups on a training course, workshop or discussion session into smaller syndicates, each with an appointed spokesperson. If time permits, all groups should address both issues. If it does not, ask some of the syndicates to discuss and give feedback on *benefits* and the remainder to discuss and give feedback on *costs*. Groups can further subdivide, if necessary, by addressing the sub-headings shown, that is, *The organisation*, *Its managers* and *The new member of staff*. Check that all participants have completed this pro forma as a personal handout when feedback is concluded.

You can use **Tool 4h** as a trainer's prompt when facilitating feedback from the discussion exercise. The list provided is not exhaustive and you should encourage both workshop leaders and participants to add to the points suggested.

Tool 4i can serve as part of the programmes outlined, as an exploratory session to ensure that trainees are aware of the barriers to learning that often exist for new staff, and to examine how induction training can be geared towards addressing their natural apprehension and nervousness.

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FOR PREVIEW ONLY

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Ask participants to work in pairs and interview one another. They should address the issue of their most memorable concerns and fears when they were new employees themselves.

Ask each pair to prepare their joint feedback, with the emphasis on what the organisation should put in place to help employees overcome the problems of starting a new job.

You can use **Tool 4j** as a trainer's prompt when facilitating feedback from the discussion exercise. The list provided is not exhaustive and you should encourage the workshop leaders and participants to add to the points suggested.

The Tools

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h 'Benefits of induction' – feedback prompt

i 'Thinking back' – discussion brief

j 'Thinking back' – feedback prompt

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4a

Suggested programme for training induction trainers

THE QUALITY WIDGET COMPANY

One-day induction trainers' workshop

9.30 am–5.00 pm

Aim

The aim of this workshop is to enable all members of staff who carry out training sessions within the Company's induction programme to undertake this role confidently and competently.

Objectives

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- state the benefits of a consistent and high standard of induction training
- identify the main considerations involved in preparing to induct new staff
- match induction topics to the appropriate resources
- plan to follow up induction training in the workplace
- identify the activities required in order to be able to evaluate induction training effectively.

Agenda

Introduction and objectives:

- participant's introductions
- the aims and objectives of the workshop
- how these will be achieved.

The aims and benefits of induction training:

- discussion exercise – 'The benefits of induction training; the cost of failing to induct'
- the induction trainer's Code of Practice.

The induction trainee:

- exploratory exercise – 'Thinking back'.

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