

**Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human
Resources**

Understanding Research in Human Resources

Name: Sarah Debra Tillman

CIPD Membership Number: 55478686

Word Count: 2,440

By signing below, I confirm that the work/evidence presented is my own, unaided work. I understand the regulations pertaining to candidate malpractice and the action that may be taken as a result.

Signed: S D Tillman

Date: 28 June 2020



STAFF INDUCTION PROCESS

ABSTRACT

To analyse and review the staff induction process within Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and suggest recommendations for improvement.

Tillman Sarah

Using a Research Approach in Human Resources

Executive Summary

The induction process within MAWWFRS has seen minimal change throughout the years. I want to establish if it meets the expectations of an employee and identify what changes they would make, if any.

This report will provide an analysis of an induction process and identify 'best practice' with the intention of improving the process within MAWWFRS.

The methodology throughout this report includes both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through use of a survey and unstructured interview. This was aimed at employees who commenced employment between 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 with the theory the induction would be fresh in their mind. The secondary data was captured within the literature review. This identified best practice and provided an analysis of the purpose and benefit of having a good induction process in place.

The keys themes emerging from the research identified the requirement for pre-employment communications to be issued from the point of recruitment to the employment stage. This would help an employee to feel instantly welcome and able to 'hit the ground running' by going straight into their role on their first day as most of the paperwork would be completed prior to their commencement of employment.

Candidates interviewed felt that the induction was rigid. It lacked engagement, it was generic; not specific to their role and too much information given to digest in one day. Therefore, consideration should be given to tailoring the induction to the specific requirements of the individual.

Careful planning is considered key as this will identify the personnel responsible for each task of the induction and provide a smooth process from start to finish. A simple checklist in place will cater for this requirement. It is reassuring that MAWWFRS have this process in place.

The following recommendations will be made to Senior Management, Line Managers and Human Resources as they predominately have the initial interaction with the employee from the initial recruitment stage to appointment of post:

- Adopt guidance issued by ACAS and CIPD for pre employment engagement.
- Implement an effective induction programme.
- Introduction of technology.

Contents Page

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
	Executive Summary	2
1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	Aim	4
1.2	Objectives	4
1.3	MAWWFRS Induction	5
2.0	Literature Review	5
2.1	Definitions	5
2.2	Employee Induction	5
2.3	Induction Process	6
2.4	Induction Topics	6
2.5	Induction Programme	6
2.6	Benefits of an Effective Induction Programme	7
2.7	Summary	8
3.0	Methodology	8
3.1	Research Approach	8
3.2	Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods	8
3.4	Primary and Secondary Data	9
3.5	Chosen Research Methodology	9
3.5.1	Survey	9
3.5.2	Unstructured Interview	9
3.6	Ethical Considerations	10
4.0	Results and Analysis	10
4.1	Survey	10
4.2	Unstructured Interview	10
5.0	Conclusion	11
6.0	Recommendations	11
7.0	Limitations	12
	Reference List	13

1.0 Introduction

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MAWWFRS) employs over 1,300 members of staff. This consists of Support and Operational members. (About us - Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, 2020)

MAWWFRS has seen an increase in recruitment and selection over the last three years and each member would have gone through the induction process: -

Year	Councillor	Control	Support	Wholetime	Retained	Total
2017/2018	8	0	16	15	75	114
2018/2019	2	5	15	32	84	138
2019/2020	25	3	27	68	68	191

(Information Source: MAWWFRS)

The induction is a crucial stage for an employee as this integrates them into the organisation and sets them up for success; the induction process will allow a new starter to lay the foundations for important relationships within the team and across the wider organisation, and give them the best possible start in the organisation (Successful Inductions: Integrating New Starters Effectively, 2020). Failure of a good induction process can lead to a poor experience for the employee, a change of mind about the role and future resignations.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this report is to critically analyse the induction process and identify 'best practice' with the intention of improving MAWWFRS induction to ensure it is current and 'fit for purpose'.

Recommendations will be made to Senior Management, Line Managers and Human Resources as they predominately have the initial interaction with the employee from the initial recruitment stage to appointment of post.

1.2 Objectives

- To target employees who commenced employment with MAWWFRS during 2019/2020 and invite them to complete a survey to determine their induction experience.
- To identify and explore Induction strategies and look at what is deemed to be 'best practice'.
- To investigate the benefits of an effective induction programme.
- To make recommendations to improve MAWWFRS current induction process.

1.3 MAWWFRS Induction

The induction programme has seen minimal change over the years. A new member of staff meets with a Human Resources representative on their first day, where they would be presented with a file full of paperwork to work through in order to undertake their induction.

The Line Manager is responsible for organising a tour of the site, Health and Safety induction and a driver familiarisation course. This normally takes place within the first few days of employment.

I feel this process can be overwhelming for a new employee to undertake on their first day and I intend to establish whether any improvements can be made to provide a better experience for the employee.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definitions

Induction can be defined as ‘the process of introducing a new employee to the company culture and processes with the aim of bringing them up to speed as quickly as possible as well as making them feel socially comfortable and aware of their professional responsibilities’ (What is an Induction? 2020).

However, the CIPD categorise ‘Induction’ into three areas; Induction being “the process where employees adjust or acclimatise to their jobs and working environment”, Orientation being “a specific course or training event that new starters attend” and Socialisation where “employees build up working relationships and find roles for themselves within their new teams” (Induction, Factsheets, CIPD, 2019).

An alternative term for induction is ‘onboarding’. As opposed to the ‘Induction’ which typically takes a maximum of a week to complete, onboarding is a more strategic plan and can take several months to complete. Onboarding aims to improve newcomers’ efficiency and experience prior to their arrival within an organisation; “the process of familiarising a new employee with the organisation and begins from the moment an offer of employment is made” (Lalwani, 2020).

2.2 Employee Induction

The induction plays a key role within any organisation as it provides an individual with the best possible start. An organisation will need the employee to be productive from day one. This is made evident by Rollag et al., 2005 who state that “the ability of organisations to transform new starters into productive employees is essential” (Carbery and Cross, 2019).

The purpose of an induction is to provide information on company policies, practices and objectives so the employee is clear in terms of the organisations strategic goals. It provides an insight to the structure of the organisation to allow for relationships to be built within the team and across the wider organisation. It also gives a clear understanding of their role to enable them to perform their duties efficiently. However, it became evident not to cram everything into one session; people become productive sooner if they understand the fundamentals of their jobs first (Successful Inductions: Integrating New Starters Effectively, 2020).

2.3 Induction Process

Research suggests that successful inductions commence upon acceptance of a job offer. This is achieved via issue of communications and inviting the individual to meet the team informally prior to their commencement with the organisation. This will prepare the employee and allow for a smoother induction process on their first day.

This is reiterated by CIPD who advise that “organisations are paying attention to employee experience before the first day of employment by ensuing pre-employment communications” (Induction, Factsheets, CIPD, 2019). Similarly, ACAS advise to “act before the employee arrives by providing a welcome pack with more detailed information to provide a fuller understanding of the organisation” (Starting staff: induction, 2015).

2.4 Induction Topics

The key areas recommended by CIPD to be included in the induction include: -

- Health and Safety, and compliance
- Facilities and IT
- Organisation information
- Culture and values
- Benefits and policies
- Role specific information
- Learning and development

2.5 Induction Programme

The review of literature undertaken highlighted the importance of having an induction plan and checklist in place. This is because various departments have a role to play in the induction process and require advanced notification to ensure the employee is ‘good to go’ on their first day. A checklist is a simple method used to assign the personnel responsible to each task and will provide a smooth process for the employee on their first day of commencement.

It also became apparent to tailor the induction to an individual's specific requirements; an individual who is fresh out of university is likely to need a different

induction to a new employee who has extensive experience with other companies, or someone returning to the world of work after a long absence (Starting staff: induction, 2015).

The above steps are clearly evidenced within the five steps of an induction programme development: -

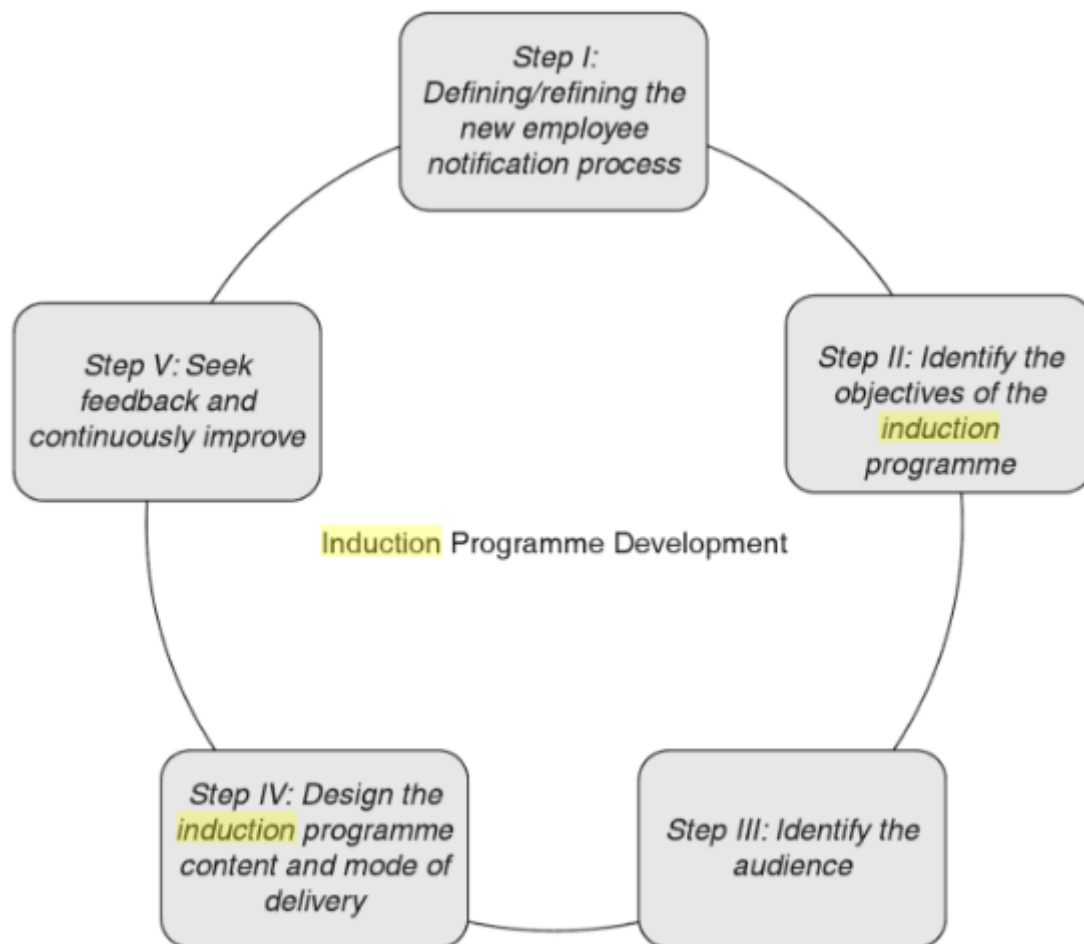


Figure 6.2 Induction programme development

(Pande and Basak, 2015)

2.6 Benefits of an Effective Induction Programme

An effective induction programme is key in order to integrate the employee into the team and improve productivity within the initial weeks of employment. It is crucial a positive first experience is had to enable them to do this; "a well-designed induction programme results in a positive first experience of an organisation" (Induction, Factsheets, CIPD, 2019).

Cooper-Thomas and Anderson, 2006 identify that failure of a good induction could have a substantial negative impact on an organisation. These include new staff

starters showing high levels of unmet expectations, leading to poor attitudes and negative behaviour that, in turn, often result in high levels of turnover. (Carbery and Cross, 2019).

2.7 Summary

The key findings from the literature clearly recognize how invaluable the induction process is within organisations. The induction is the key link from the offer of appointment through to an employee integrating into the organisation. Planning plays a key role as various departments have an input, therefore, having a checklist will provide clarity and identify the responsibilities for each department. Consideration should also be given to the delivery of the induction as it should be tailored to meet an individual's specific requirements.

3.0 Methodology

The aim of this report is to critically analyse the staff induction process within MAWWFRS with the intention of improving the process. I will evaluate various research methods to determine which is best suited to provide the desired outcome.

3.1 Research Approach

The two main approaches used within the research field are:

- Interpretivist: will focus their research on words, observations and meanings (Anderson, 2004). From this perspective information is collected from observation or interviews (qualitative rather than quantitative data) and is often seen to be more valuable for researcher.
- Positivist: to collect facts and study the relationship between one set of facts with another. A positivist will analyse quantitative data using valid techniques to produce quantifiable and generalisable conclusions.

3.2 Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Qualitative research focuses on obtaining data through open-ended communication. The goal is to establish what people think. Methods used to collect this data include individual interviews, focus groups or through observation.

Quantitative research is designed to collect facts. The data obtained is structured and statistical and allows for general conclusions from research undertaken to be established. Methods used to collect this data include structured interviews, questionnaires or surveys.

3.4 Primary and Secondary Data

Horn (2012) defines primary data as information that has been collected for the study in which it is used (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016). In contrast secondary data already exists and is readily available to use.

3.5 Chosen Research Methodology

I have selected a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct my research: -

3.5.1 Survey

This will provide anonymity so participants will provide honest feedback, it is more convenient for respondents as they can complete it during their free time and provides immediate data to allow for conclusions to be drawn.

Participants

The chosen sample identified to complete the survey was the 191 employees who commenced employment with MAWWFRS during 2019/2020. This should provide honest feedback as the induction should be fresh in their minds.

Analysis

The responses received will be recorded and analysed on Microsoft Excel to identify areas of weakness and determine areas for improvement.

Reliability, Validity and Research Limitations

My sample size is limited as it can only be issued to the 191 employees. It is also difficult to prompt individuals to provide more information within their response, therefore complex questions can be difficult to ask. There is also the risk that not all the 191 employees will complete the survey, and this will limit my analysis.

3.5.2 Unstructured Interview

This will provide employees to be open and honest and deliver a better understanding of their induction experience. It will clearly establish the positive and negative aspects of MAWWFRS process and allow for elaborate answers.

Participants

I will identify and select 10 out of 191 employees who commenced employment with MAWWFRS during 2019/2020, in different departments, and who each have a

different employment background to determine if the induction satisfied their expectations.

Analysis

I am going to use a thematic analysis to identify patterns of themes within the interview data to draw conclusions.

Reliability, Validity and Research Limitations

Interviews can take a significant amount of time to organise and administer as it will be dependent on an employee's availability. It can produce large amounts of text which can be time consuming to analyse.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Consideration has also been given to the ethical issues. All participants will be made aware of the purpose of the research to allow them to make an informed judgment about whether they wish to participate along with assurances that adherence of confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout the process.

4.0 Results and Analysis

The results from the research undertaken within MAWWFRS have been analysed and the majority was positive. However, the key themes emerging in terms for improvement are summarised below: -

4.1 Survey

The survey generated a response rate of 80.01% which equates to 153 employees. Firstly, it was reassuring that each respondent undertook an induction with MAWWFRS and given all the necessary information on their first official day of employment. However, 35% indicated that the information, advice and guidance provided on day 1 was overwhelming and a lot to digest. This supports the literature review undertaken to perhaps spread the induction across a longer period of time and only cover the essential information on day one.

Another key theme emerging was the lack of engagement from MAWWFRS from the recruitment stage to employment. This supports CIPD and ACAS that "successful inductions commence upon acceptance of a job offer".

4.2 Unstructured Interview

Candidates interviewed who had previous employment history described the induction process as "ridged". The candidate felt the induction could have been

tailored to suit their requirements. This is supported by the five stages of an induction programme “to tailor the induction to an individual’s specific requirements”.

In addition, the majority reiterated induction should commence upon appointment of post to allow them to integrate into the organisation prior to their arrival. As opposed to being handed a ‘welcome pack’ full of paper documentation on their first day, which is outdated, they felt technology could provide a more modern approach and provide the tools required to fulfil their role.

5.0 Conclusion

The data and research collated provides clear evidence that MAWWFRS need to make improvements to the induction process to ensure it remains current and ‘fit for purpose’.

Following a review of literature, it is evident that best practice, in keeping with the CIPD and ACAS, is to ensure engagement from the offer appointment to commencement of employment.

It is important to plan the induction and not cram into a one-day session. A checklist will cater for this as the induction can be organised on a per role basis and reduce the volume of paperwork provided to the employee on their first day.

The induction should be tailored to meet the specific requirements of an individual. Therefore, it is imperative that consideration is given to this prior to the commencement of an employee to ensure a positive experience and the employee feels comfortable during the early stages of their employment.

6.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations will be presented to the stakeholders with the intention to improve the induction process at MAWWFRS: -

- Adopt ACAS and CIPD guidance and issue communication to employees prior to their commencement of employment. This will allow them to familiarise themselves with the organisation at their own leisure and ease them in gently on their first day.
- Implement an effective Induction Programme. It should not be one session. The induction should be planned out, flexible and tailored to the specific requirements of the individual.
- The introduction of technology within the induction process. Investigate the potential of introducing the ‘Onboarding’ module within the HR system to inform future design.

7.0 Limitations

Due to the nature of the topic, and the timescales involved, I feel that more time would have benefited the research element of this project.

Reference List

Anderson, V., 2004. *Research Methods in Human Resource Management by Valerie Anderson*. Wimbledon, London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, p.13.

Carbery, R. and Cross, C., 2019. *Human Resource Management*. 2nd ed. UK: Red Globe Press, p.67.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. 2020. *About us - Mid and West Wales Fire And Rescue Service*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.mawwfire.gov.uk/english>> [Accessed 24 June 2020].

CIPD. 2019. *Induction, Factsheets, CIPD*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/recruitment/induction-factsheet>> [Accessed 18 June 2020].

Lalwani, P., 2020. *What Is Employee Onboarding Process? Definition, Templates, And Best Practices*. [online] Hr.toolbox.com. Available at: <<https://hr.toolbox.com/articles/what-is-new-employee-onboarding/>> [Accessed 25 June 2020].

Pande, S. and Basak, S., 2015. *Human Resource Management: Text and Cases*. 2nd ed. India: Vikas, p.201.

Archive.acas.org.uk. 2015. *Starting Staff: Induction*. [online] Available at: <https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/4436/Starting-staff-induction-guide/pdf/Starting_staff_-_induction_Nov.pdf> [Accessed 26 June 2020].

Mindtools.com. 2020. *Successful Inductions: Integrating New Starters Effectively*. [online] Available at: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newtmm_99.htm> [Accessed 24 June 2020].

Taylor, S. and Woodhams, C., 2016. *Studying Human Resource Management*. 2nd ed. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, p.93.

HRZone. 2020. *What Is an Induction?* [online] Available at: <<https://www.hrzone.com/hr-glossary/what-is-an-induction>> [Accessed 25 June 2020].