
UNIT 12 INDUCTION AND PLACEMENT

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12.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you should be able to learn how:

- create a favourable impression on a new employee for the organisation,
- promote right kind of attitude towards the organisation in other employees,
- facilitate learning of right methods for performing the job,
- develop a sense of belonging to the organisation,
- appreciate a spirit of team work, and
- clarify terms and conditions of employment to a new employee.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

As soon as an employee is recruited the first step relates to induction or orientation programmes. Attempts are made to introduce him or her to the job, other fellow workers and surroundings.

Induction or orientation may be defined as a **process of guiding and counselling the employee to familiarise him or her with the organisation and the job situation**. This exerts a marked influence on the job tenure and effectiveness.

The induction process accomplishes several objectives including formation of a favourable impression of the organisation, attitude development, the feeling of belonging, facilitation of learning and team work with other employees. It minimises employee grievances, frustration and turnover as also helps in the attainment of numerous training objectives.

The induction programme clarifies the terms and conditions of employment, communicates specific job requirements to the employees and provides confidence in the company as well as in their own ability to accomplish the work assigned to them effectively.

As regards the contents of the induction programme, it embraces a wide range of items usually embodied in the employee handbook or manual. The contents of the induction programme should be determined in the form of checklist specifying the topics to be covered. Attempts should be made to follow-up and assess the programme by interviewing the new employees as a measure to correct the gaps in the knowledge and attitude of the employees.

Explicitly, induction is a line responsibility supported with staff advice and guidance. The Supervisor, foreman or manager should be trained in the induction process, and care has to be taken that he or she does not entirely delegate this crucial responsibility to fellow workers. The Personnel Department of the hotel should be made responsible for training the managers, supervisors, or attendants in this respect, and evaluating the programme periodically. Several induction methods can be used depending upon the needs of the organisation. It may, however be noted that specific methods are effective for specific category of employees which should be determined through intensive research programmes. Several methods of training can be effectively employed for inducing new employees. These are the issues discussed in this Unit.

12.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER INDUCTION

The term "induction" means installation or initiation. The new recruit is installed into a position or job, and initiated into the team that makes up the work-force of the organisation.

Induction is the process of introducing new recruits to an organisation and explaining their role within it. Induction process is mainly followed keeping in mind the following points:

- Induction to the firm, its environment and systems and its people, and
- Introduction to the department and actual job/work and its requirements.

It usually begins with a guided tour of the building etc. Induction is important because impressions gained by new employees during this period can influence their perception of the organisation for many years to come. Also, good induction procedures help employees fit into strange and initially uncomfortable environment quickly and without fuss. Newcomers invariably join the organisation wanting to succeed. They wish to do a good job, to be accepted by their colleagues, and generally to become part of the organisation. Induction procedures should help recruits achieve these objectives.

It may be regarded as a positive step, as distinguished from the negative weeding out of unsuitable candidates during selection. Placement means the assignment of specific jobs to individuals, and their adoption or assimilation in the working team or family. As a matter of fact, induction is the process by which effective placement is accomplished.

In smaller organisations, the process of initiations may be informal, while in larger organisations it includes a series of steps by which a new recruit is aided in fitting into the organisation, becoming acquainted with supervisors and fellow employees, and achieving a personal adjustment to working relationships. The first week/month involves extensive and difficult problems of personal adjustment, especially for new employees. The whole situation with its time-keeping schedules, new supervisors, informal social systems, hostile group behaviours, social structures, work-load, internal cliques and possible favouritism and vested interests is likely to be very different from earlier experience; and therefore it is a difficult one.

The policy on induction and placement simply aims at that new recruits shall be made to feel and develop themselves as a part of the organisation as early as possible. It may involve several steps:

- a) Apart from a guided tour of the premises, it would need formal/informal introduction to supervisors, fellow workers, adopting right methods of performing the job assigned, etc.
- b) It may require vocational guidance; for the particular job or trade, or skill or profession, due to either change of job or technology, or environment, to facilitate his absorption into the organisation.

- c) The guidance process requires careful balancing of interests and aptitudes of individuals against long-term prospective job-requirements. Those who are made responsible for providing such guidance need the same skills in assessing aptitudes, interests, and related traits that make up human personalities required for effective selection. If needed, the firm's literature should also be given to the new incumbent.

12.3 INDUCTION PROCESS

It is obvious that as a new employee one needs certain information to settle down and become effective quickly. Induction should be started from the personnel department, where new employees should be received on their first day at work. Department managers have a responsibility to ensure that their initial training is continued in the workplace. Since a new recruit cannot be expected to absorb all the information he or she needs in one day, the induction process may take place over a period of two or three days and should be completed by the end of the first week. The extent of induction will depend on the skill, experience or seniority of the new recruit.

Initial induction is best undertaken by the manager or supervisor. The recruit should be introduced to the people whom he or she is to work with (write their names down on a piece of paper and give it to the recruit; names are quickly forgotten in the first meeting) and to the person to whom the recruit is responsible. This latter individual should be instructed to help the recruit in every way possible and to be a friend and adviser during the newcomer's first couple of week/months. The recruit should feel free to approach this person at any time in order to seek guidance on any problem. Arrange to see the recruit at the end of his or her first day, and again at the end of the first week to discuss the progress achieved during induction.

A good induction procedure causes the recruit to feel part of and committed to the organisation and to be partly socialised into its working methods, norms and interpersonal relations. The newcomer should also be introduced to the internal communication system so that he/she is able to find out things independently. Often, new jobs are associated with new and unfamiliar travel and work routines, new relationships and possibly a change of home and this might create high levels of anxiety. Recruits can easily feel bewildered and unwanted by the existing staff and much sympathy is needed during this potentially tense experience. Adapting to new circumstances and rational decisions can only be taken after a reasonable setting-in period has elapsed.

The new employees ought to know where they should go for help if they experience problems. A new entrant should be told what to do if he or she:

- Has a problem with money or understanding the wage/salary system,
- Has a medical problem,
- Feels that working conditions are unsafe or unwelcome,
- Does not get on with other people in the department,
- Has difficulty with the work,
- Is bullied or harassed,
- Has a complaint, and
- Does not receive adequate training.

Mostly a few points have to be kept in mind by the manager:

- The problems arise due to lack of time for transmitting information and the unsuitability of the environments in which induction sometimes take place.
- No one is capable of absorbing large amounts of (perhaps uninteresting) information in one go so induction should be staggered.

- Try to make the recruit feel that he is needed.
- Do not repeat points already made at the interview or in the written job-description circulated to candidates at the time of application; expand on the information the newcomer already possesses.
- Explain the organisation-structure, the recruit's duties and responsibilities, training and promotion opportunities and so on.
- You will also have to explain expected performance and quality standards and the norms of behaviour and protocol already established within the organisation.
- Some safety matters, security arrangements, performance appraisal systems, formal grievance procedures, etc. These manuals are particularly suitable for mundane and infrequently encountered problems such as leave, salary scales, gratuity, etc. but not for other more urgent issues such as discipline, overtime requirements and (importantly) the whereabouts of fire exits, fire fighting equipment, first-aid facilities protective clothing, etc.

12.4 INDUCTION PROGRAMME

The following activities should be undertaken by the personnel department and the department in which the new recruit is placed in:

In the Personnel Department:

- 1) Welcome to the organisation.
- 2) Receive any other necessary documents and information (e.g. details).
- 3) Explain what the company does, its history, and his own place in the group.
- 4) Describe the work of the new employee's department, and its relationship to other departments.
- 5) Give the new recruit a company employee's handbook (if one exists).
- 6) Draw his or her attention to the rules that need particular emphasis.
- 7) Where appropriate or necessary explain the trade union position in the organisation.
- 8) Employee welfare refers to the retirement benefits, pension and life assurance scheme and any other scheme that he or she should know about (e.g. sickness benefit; suggestion scheme).
- 9) Ensure that he or she knows the correct hours of work, rate of pay when payment can be expected and sickness and holiday entitlement.
- 10) Explain the importance of regular attendance.
- 11) Indicate the sort of training that the new employee will receive and his or her career prospects.
- 12) Answer questions, that an employee may have.
- 13) Take the employee on a brief tour to give an impression of the work of the organisation ending in his or her department. Hand him or her over to the manager.
- 14) N.B.A. prepared flip-chart showing the sections of the organisation etc., is useful to induction.

In the Department:

- 1) Welcome to the department.

- 2) Explain the work of the department.
- 3) Explain what the employee will be doing.
- 4) Ensure that he or she knows:
 - a) The relevance of his or her and the department's work to the organisation etc.
 - b) The organisations' goals and policy.
 - c) The procedures.
- 5) Explain the importance of safety, go through any safety rules that apply, explain what to do in the event of an accident and if there is a fire.
- 6) Introduce the new recruit to the person with whom he or she will be having training.
- 7) Introduce the trade union representative, where appropriate.
- 8) Introduce other members of the department.
- 9) Start the employee's job-training as appropriate.
- 10) During the first day, check that the employee is progressing satisfactorily.
- 11) At the end of the second day, sit down with the trainee, new employee discuss progress, ask for and answer questions.
- 12) On subsequent days, check progress at least once, and at the end of the first week have a thorough discussion to ascertain whether he or she is grasping the job, and is satisfied with the organisation.

The induction should be taken as a complex process. It cannot be properly concluded with a short orientation programme. Perhaps rapid-fire injections of a concentrated dose of information may not be effective. The manner while introducing the new employee to the colleagues and immediate supervisor should see to it that the new entrant is comfortable with them. This will help in the future, as when the employee picks up on the job, he or she may have many questions which he or she might hesitate to ask initially. But if the new entrant is made to feel comfortable with his or her colleagues and supervisor then he or she won't have any trouble asking questions or discussing any problem he or she might encounter while doing the job assigned. Hence, the process of induction has to be continued for several weeks or months.

Starting with preliminary counselling interview, many large organisations provide a number of formal orientation sessions, lectures, which may also be supplemented with literature and also audio-visual programmes such as charts, pictures, slides and films etc.

The induction procedure and orientation problems are more complicated when new employees are to be posted to other offices or branches throughout the country, as the case may be in large hotel claims.

The follow-up is a continuing procedure of great importance. Induction is not complete without a follow-up which is essentially an audit of the entire procedure, and an appraisal of the success with which a new employee becomes adjusted to the organisation.

An induction programme, therefore, primarily consists of three steps:

1. **General Orientation by the Staff:** It gives necessary general information about the history and orientation of the firm. The purpose is to help an employee to build up some pride and interest in the organisation.
2. **Specific Orientation by the job supervisor:** The employee is shown the department and has place of work, the location of facilities and is told about the organisation's specific practices and customs. The purpose is to enable the employee to adjust with his or her work and work environment.

- 3. Follow up orientation by either the personnel department or the supervisor:**
This is conducted within one week to six months of the initial induction and by a foreman or a specialist. The purpose is to find out whether the employee is reasonably well satisfied with the organisation and his or her work. Through personal talks, guidance and counselling, efforts are made to remove the difficulties experienced by the newcomer.

12.5 PLACEMENT

Placement or actual posting of an employee to a specific job has an experimental element in it and for most employees it is a decisive step. The department head/supervisor should be able to accept him or her as there is sufficient reason to think that the new recruit can do what the job demands, (job requirements) imposes (in working conditions, strain etc.), and offers (in the form of pay, job-satisfaction status, companionship with fellow workers, and promotion prospects) etc. Though it is very difficult to match all these factors, yet both the personnel department and the line staff have to co-operate to achieve it.

For reasons of the new employees' compatibility and his or her acceptance by the line, he or she is usually put on probation for a specified period during which he or she is on trial. It may vary from few weeks or months, and sometimes a year or two as in government.

However, in case during this trial period he or she is not found acceptable to the line department, he or she may again be interviewed by the personnel department to explore the possibilities of fitting him or her into another job, which may be more suited to his or her qualifications, aptitudes, or previous experience. Such a second placement is sometimes known as "differential placement", which is becoming more relevant in this country also due to rising costs of recruitment and selection, changing employee's attitudes, with the spread of higher and better education, and fast developing higher standards of living.

12.6 INDUCTION AS AN INTEGRATED PART OF TRAINING

It appears that barring a few multinational companies/institutions who follow their parent company practices, scientific methods of regular induction and proper and careful placement of new employees are virtually unknown in most organisations.

The government, semi-government and public sector and other autonomous organisations spend large sums of money on advertisements, and selection, but after recruitment, new employees are just left on their own to grope their way into the dark and long alley's of huge monolithic organisations, where they are at the mercy of often ill equipped, nonqualified and mostly prejudiced old supervisors and managers.

In private organisations, barring a few companies, which may be exceptions, nobody has the time to devote to such unproductive (in their view) activities. The personnel department cannot do much in the absence of cooperation from the line managers and staff.

Though there is acute dearth of properly trained people, who can deliver the goods, most organisations are either unaware of the need for organising proper induction and placement programmes, or think it is an unnecessary expenditure. Such organisation does not realise that without proper induction and training an employee can be only partially productive in his or her assigned job.

Apart from all these, more important in the Indian conditions are the legal regulations, which require that after usually the probation period which is 15 days in employment in factories, and 3 to 6 months in other establishments, an employee shall be automatically permanent. In initial employment, within the probation period, which is not more than 3 to 6 months, if a new employee is not found suitable he or she can be discharged. But

after the completion of the probation period he/she becomes a confirmed employee, and if turns out to be unproductive, becomes a liability to the organisation.

The discharge of an employee after his or her completion of probationary period, is an extremely difficult task, and involves all the steps of disciplinary action.

As a matter of fact, a properly planned and executed induction programme, forms an integral part of training. The test of follow-up of the new employee lies in the assurance of his or her adjustment into the new surroundings and environment. If the line department/supervisor has taken proper and constructive interest in the new employee, his or her fitness and acceptability to be a member of the working group/team in which he or she has to work, is assured.

If this task is viewed by the Industrial psychologist or the sociologist it is likely to be described as a problem in assimilation, which a supervisor may call "team work". The management and supervision should have sensible concern for proper induction of the new worker to produce desirable results in the attitude of the new employee, which is the ultimate aim of training. The management should always remember that induction process does not start and end with an introduction of the new employee to his or her new environment, but proper follow up should be done to check whether the right person has been placed in the right job.

Check Your Progress

1) What do you understand by Induction? Describe the importance of Proper Induction Process.

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2) What do you understand by Induction Process?

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3) Describe the induction Programme in an organisation.

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4) What is Placement? How is it different from Induction?

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12.7 LET US SUM UP

This Unit explained the importance and need for proper and systematic induction of a new employee in the organisation. It also outlined the process and the need for methodical induction programmes, since they are in a way preliminary to "training". It pointed out that the escalating employee costs, and legal regulations in India make it imperative to exercise due care in the first few weeks or months, since after the probationary period an employee becomes a permanent member of the organisation.

12.8 CLUES TO ANSWERS

Check Your Progress

- 1) Base your answer on Secs. 12.1 and 12.11.
- 2) Read 12.3 for your answer.
- 3) Compare your answer with the contents of Sec. 12.4.
- 4) Write your answer after reading Sec. 12.5 and comparing placement with induction.

Activity

As a manager prepare an induction programme for the following new recruits:

- 1) Newly recruited bar tender
- 2) Hotel receptionist
- 3) EPBX operator
- 4) Restaurant manager

The following words may be of some help in preparing the programme.

Star category, tourist profiles, bed occupancy rate, number of restaurants, reporting officer, office timings, duty hours, VIP phone numbers, emergency numbers, customer care, cocktails, etc.

SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS

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