

# Youth-friendly induction

## A guide for employers

In our 2015 Youth Survey, young people told us that **having a clear induction** was one of the most important factors for having a good experience of starting a job. For those who had had a bad experience, poor inductions were the biggest cause, an experience shared by over half of respondents.

For any new starter, an effective induction will provide **a clear outline of day-to-day roles, responsibilities and expected behaviour**. It will also give new starters a chance to settle in by getting to know colleagues and the work environment, and cover any training needed for the organisation's particular processes such as using any bespoke software or following customer handling procedures.

For young people starting their first job or first role in a particular environment, an induction not only covers these essential areas but also gives them **some context about how their role fits into the wider organisation** and sets the tone for how they should conduct themselves at work.

Small things that seem obvious to experienced employees are all new to young people and nothing should be taken for granted. Just like older workers, **young people learn at different speeds** so having a flexible, personalised induction is important. Young people can be very nervous about starting their first job so creating a welcoming and friendly environment is essential.

### Key things to consider:

- How clearly does your induction explain the key things that your young starters will be expected to do on a day-to-day basis? Does this fully cover all workplace procedures and expected conduct?
- What essential training do your young starters need during induction to undertake day-to-day tasks?
- How are you making young starters feel like part of the organisation? Do you involve other young staff to make your new starters feel comfortable?
- How are you tailoring your induction for a diverse audience? Is it flexible to allow individuals to learn at different speeds?
- How are you keeping your induction up to date with any organisational changes?

Backed by  City & Guilds Group

### 1. Decide what key information and guidance your young starters need

All new starters go through a learning process to find out exactly what they will be doing on a day to day basis and how the wider organisation works. For young people, especially those entering their first job, the clearer the outline of their roles and responsibilities you can provide, the better.

In our 2015 Youth Survey, nearly a third of young people who had had a bad experience of starting a job felt this was due to not being given a clear outline of what was expected of them, meaning that they were put at a disadvantage from the start.

No details about a role should be taken for granted, and it is good to cover all aspects of the job. For example, during **Marks & Spencer's** induction process for young people on their Movement to Work programme, all aspects of the role are covered including the basics of how to approach and greet customers.

It is also important to make sure that inductions are up to date and contain relevant information. Marks & Spencer also review their induction day each year to make any necessary changes.

### 2. Consider the best way to help young people settle in

All new starters need an adjustment period to get to know colleagues and become more familiar with the organisation, and it can take longer for young people with little or no previous employment experience to feel at ease and understand how an organisation works.

You can help young starters to feel welcome by getting other young employees to lead part of the induction and provide information about working at the organisations. For example, **the City & Guilds Group** asks their existing apprentices to design and update their induction programme to make sure it is youth-friendly. It helps new young employees to understand the basics of working life, for example: explaining about appropriate work wear; highlighting the nearest transport links; and also identifying current apprentices and how to contact them – in case they want any advice or support from someone their age.

Also, involving senior members of staff helps to give young starters a good overview of the whole organisation and how their work will be contributing to its shared aims and objectives. For example, the Managing Director of **Compass** welcomes new starters in an induction video, and store managers are invited to talk to new starters about their roles and careers during **Marks & Spencer's** induction.

### Partnerships

Some businesses also benefit from delivering joint inductions with partner organisations at the start of shared in-work support programmes for young employees. For example, for the last 10 years all **British Gas** apprentices have undertaken a Gold Duke of Edinburgh award alongside their training.

This includes a week long residential induction which allows apprentices to get to know one another away from a more formal work environment and covers a range of soft skills before starting the more technical training.

**Marks & Spencer** also run their employability programme in partnership with The Prince's Trust, who deliver some specialised elements of the induction.

### 3. Plan what training young starters will need

Every organisation has its own processes and procedures that new starters need to learn, including practicalities in the workplace, HR procedures and using bespoke IT systems or other equipment, as well as individual processes around each different role.

It is important to remember that young people are learning all these things from scratch and it is worth taking time to make sure they are fully covered. For example, **EE** have a minimum of a 1 week induction programme to cover all the essential training required including health and safety and key company procedures.

Many companies now use e-learning as an effective way of delivering essential training to young people. For example, **Compass** use **City & Guilds Kineo's** software to deliver a 12-week induction programme, using materials that have been designed to give young people an insight into different aspects of their job, using a mixture of bespoke video content and simulations.

### 4. Put personalisation at the centre of your induction process

Just like all other employees, individual young people all learn at different speeds so having the flexibility to allow young people to learn at their own pace during the induction is very important.

By using **City & Guilds Kineo's** e-learning software, Compass enables young people to complete all essential training at their own speed during their induction.

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#### *Top tip!*

**Costain** found that young people do not learn in the same way as older people, and respond better to an immersive induction rather than lots of small training sessions. Taking this on board, they run a week-long off-site 'bootcamp' to induct new young employees.

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The induction period is also a good time to observe new starters to identify whether they might need any additional support on an on-going basis. One way that **Barclays** does this is by giving apprentices a 12 month probation period instead of 3 months to give them longer to prove themselves and allow them longer than other employees to pick up all aspects of their roles.

#### Case studies

[Read more about how Compass Group's personalised approach to induction](#)

[Read more about British Gas' partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme](#)

#### Where to go next?

- Having a youth-friendly induction is just one way to future proof your business. Use our [Youth Employment Assessment Tool](#) to find out what you're doing well and get some ideas on how to improve in other areas.