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Managers Guidance – How to induct an agile working employee

Version control

This document is subject to regular review due to legislative and policy changes. The latest versions of all our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Notes / changes
v1.0			New guide

Contents

Guidance – How to induct and agile working employee

Introduction

Induction is a key part of the worker experience, and can influence how well the new starter manages with both their new role and their employer. It begins from the point at which an offer is made and accepted, and incorporates the entire joining experience, taking into account learning about the role, understanding the organisation and its culture, and building relationships with new colleagues.

Health and Safety legislation requires employers to provide whatever information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, “so far as is reasonably practicable” (SFARP), the Health Safety and Welfare (HS&W) of employees at work. HS&W training is particularly important when people start work or are new to a role.

Managers need to consider how they manage the whole process of embedding new staff from the interview to the point at which they’re truly part of the team. It is about them moving from being outsiders to being insiders.

Managers will have an established team, who know one another and work well together, it is therefore essential that the new employee feels part of this team and is given the opportunity to be part of that established team. This can be a daunting time for a new employee and it may take more time than usual for them to feel fully integrated into the team. Managers therefore need to spend more time in planning and preparing and utilising the probationary period to its full. We cannot expect a new employee to fit in and thrive with a poor induction programme.

This guide will support managers as to how to induct and agile working employee. More information can be found on the website under induction and new starters and further information can be found in the ‘How to engage an agile working team’ guide, which may be useful.

The existing team

When a new employee is recruited into an existing team, it is essential that all staff are made aware of the new person and when they are starting and be involved where possible in the induction process or programme. This will encourage team work, and give some existing team members a role in helping and supporting the new employee to feel part of the team.

Managers should communicate to the team the information of when the new employee will join and there will be an expectation that all will welcome that employee into the team. Explaining that they were all 'new' to the team at one point and therefore to be on hand to support at any time.

The new employee

Managers should keep in contact with the new employee straight from the point of offer, ensuring that they check in and make sure that the on boarding process is going smoothly and that they are on hand should then new employee have any questions in relation to their new role and induction.

Managers need to ensure what the new employee may need in terms of support or any other additional considerations that need to be given to support their induction.

New employees will no doubt feeling anxious and apprehensive prior to them starting, and managers should try and ease this anxiousness by ensuring that the new employee is fully aware of what the induction process will entail, and be prepared and ready on their first day, with all the information sent or given to them.

New employees need to be made aware of safety processes and measures that the employer has in place to keep them safe SAFRP whilst at work.

Induction Process

Managers need to ensure that they fully understand the induction process. Ensuring that they explain to the new employee what the expectations are in terms of the completion of mandatory modules within the 6 months probationary period. There are also handy induction checklists that can be used for your new employees. These are devised as a checklist and it may be that you want to use or create a new department specific checklists with specific departmental processes and tasks that you wish to include. For more information please visit https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/jobs-and-employees/my-employment/probationary-period.aspx

There is also a dedicated New Starter Website which has all the information that a new employee will need and this needs to communicated and shared with the staff member at the earliest opportunity. https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/jobs-and-employees/my-employment/new-starters/new-starters.aspx

All new employees will receive their E-Learning log on details in their contract of employment and will normally be the first three letters of their first name followed by their payroll number (including the letter), all in lower case. Passwords are always set to Welcome1% (capital W).

It may be that some new employees will have already accessed this site as soon as they have received their contract of employment, and this is encouraged so that they can become familiar with the site and ensure that the site is working for them.

Face to face or virtual?

Managers need to consider whether it is at all possible to conduct all or part of the induction programme face to face within the office environment, or whether any tasks could be done virtually.

Ideally it is always better for the new employee to be shown face to face and if there is no reason why this cannot be done, this should be the preferred and better approach. Of course planning is key and having a rota/timetable where different people are in the office for a set period of time may work.

This will give the new employee and opportunity to meet the team and to be shown first-hand the Denbighshire Way. This can be crucial in embedding and retaining the new employee into the team and into Denbighshire County Council.

Buddy and/or pairing up system

When developing an induction programme, make sure that there is someone within the team that will act as a buddy or be paired up with the new employee to show them the processes.

This will ensure that the new employee will have someone to go to should they have a query or concern later on in their journey when they are working in a more agile manner.

Managers should also consider allocating a single buddy to the new person at the beginning of their journey and throughout their probationary period so that the employee has a point of contact.

When considering a buddy, it may be beneficial to think about their home to work location where maybe they could car share as well as other factors like roles, hobbies and interests etc.

Small manageable tasks

Consider giving your new employee a small number of tasks per day/week which are varied. This will give them a sense of progress and get them used to delivering specific pieces of tasks/work. They will not feel too overwhelmed and will feel that they are contributing to the team.

Ensure that as their manager that you give them feedback on these tasks, this can support with the management of their probationary period, but also set clear expectations as to the standards that are expected of them. Feedback is extremely important to any employee but more so to an employee who is working in an agile manner.

The Denbighshire Way

Ensure that you explain what is meant by the ‘Denbighshire Way’. Ensure each new employee (and existing employees) understand what is meant by this. Are they clear the Denbighshire County Council values and the Chief Executives 5 priorities, all establishing the ‘one council’ approach?

Managers will need to explain how they fit into this and how their role supports the 'one council' approach. Managers should get the whole team to be involved with the new employee's induction process and a good way to set a 'one council' approach.

Availability of team

When the new employee is embarking on their probationary period, and trying to learn the new role and embedding themselves as a team member, it is essential that they know who is available within the team.

It is therefore essential that there is a team rota in place, where they can see who is working and who is not. This can be done via calendars, therefore it is essential that the team keeps their calendars up to date at all times.

The internal Jabber system can also be a tool where new employees can see at a glance of which team member is available to them should they need to call upon someone for support. The new employee needs to understand what it means when an employee is displaying a 'do not disturb' mode or 'away'.

Social team time

Joining a new team can be daunting and overwhelming especially if there is no normal office environment. It is therefore essential that the new employee feels part of the team, and has the time to get to know their colleagues.

This can be done via virtual or face to face social team time. It may be a good idea to introduce the new employee to the whole team via a coffee/tea break which can be done virtually. Managers could also arrange a face to face walk where the team can get together socially and get to spend some time together, which they may not get an opportunity to do all the time. Even meeting for a monthly team lunch followed by a team meeting may be a good way to engage and get the team together to bond and socialise.

It may be an idea to do something fun, and for each existing employee to state a unique fact about themselves so that the new employee can get to know them better. It may also be appropriate if the new employee is willing to share some interesting facts about themselves to the rest of the team.

Agile working is about people and culture as much as processes and practices, so spending time welcoming and getting to know employees is time well spent.

Regular 1 to 1's and probationary period reviews

Throughout the 6-month probationary period it is essential that managers have regular 1 to1 meetings with all staff including new employees.

This will be an opportunity to talk about how they are settling in and how they are finding the team and to answer any questions or concerns they may have. It will also be an opportunity for managers to feedback on their progress and whether they are meeting the expectations expected of the new employee.

These will need to be conducted in a professional manner, and be recorded appropriately using iTrent. If there are any improvements needed then these should be discussed and agreed with a review period set.

Manager should speak to their HR Business Partner should they need to seek advice and support on this matter.

The best way to improve your employee induction process is to ask about their experiences.

For example;

- What is something you wish we had explained better in the first week?
- What's one piece of advice you would give to the next person who is recruited?
- How could we have done a better job of your induction? What could be improved?

This gives you great feedback to consider and include in your future inductions, as your team grows. It is also a good idea to ask for feedback from them. What do they think is going well in terms of their own induction? How they are finding the process?