

How to Induct New Members Help Sheet

Induction is one of the most practical ways of ensuring new Management Committee members understand their role, the workings of the organisation and their relationship with others in and outside the organisation.

All organisations, regardless of their size and purpose, should provide an induction programme for new Committee members. The better your induction, the more effective new members will be!

An effective induction programme will:

1. Provide core information and advice to enable a new member to understand the organisation and their role
2. Ensure that new members feel welcome, valued and part of the team

Providing core information

The information that a Management Committee member needs to perform the role varies from organisation to organisation, according to the legal status, size, and stage of development.

However, at a minimum, all Management Committee members should be provided with:

- the group's governing document (e.g., constitution)
- annual report and accounts
- minutes of previous three or four Management Committee meetings
- code of conduct

Our Induction Checklist provides guidance on what to include in your induction programme for new members.

Involving new members from diverse ethnic backgrounds?

Check out Volunteer Now's [Diversity in Volunteering Information Sheet](#).

Ensuring that new members feel welcome

New members will feel comfortable and confident in contributing if they are made to feel welcome, valued and well supported. It is important to consider how you will facilitate this within your Committee, rather than presuming that relationships will form and settle of their own accord. This is particularly important when introducing a new member who comes with a very different background or skill set to the current members (e.g., where a former service user becomes a committee member).

Here are some ideas that other organisations have used:

- special reception to follow election of new members at AGM
- dedicating a significant section of their first meeting to introductions, rather than launching straight into business
- 10 minute 'speed dating' style introductions to staff and Committee members
- new members are matched with an existing Committee member who is responsible for introductions, explanation of developments and providing any clarification or direction for the first year
- regular one-to-one support and supervision provided by Chairperson or Vice-Chair to check how each Committee member is getting on and to address any concerns
- scheduling training or development 'away days' for the whole Committee shortly after new members join (e.g., looking at strategic or operational planning)

Source: www.diycommitteeguide.org

How to provide induction

Induction may involve a combination of meetings, familiarisation with premises or facilities and written information. This can be a process over time rather than all done at once. The induction programme may also include a review meeting two to three months after induction to discuss first impressions and items such as:

Case Study

"When I was elected on the Management Committee/Board of the Rural Community Network (RCN) I attended an induction meeting with other new members. I received a Board Members' Handbook which included general information about RCN, role and responsibilities, staffing, finance, strategic plan and policies and procedures. The chairperson gave a summary of this at the induction.

What I liked best about the induction was getting a better feel about the work of RCN. This was done through a very creative 'dating' activity where each board member has a 10-minute one-to-one presentation from various staff members on key areas of work and projects. It was very informative and put names to faces."

- any further explanation of the organisation's structure or activities
- any individual development needs (e.g., understanding the finances etc)
- discussing the specific skills and expertise of the new member and how these can best be used
- suggestions or ideas regarding how the Committee operates

Ongoing Support

Don't forget that Management Committee members, just like any other volunteers, will operate most effectively if they are provided with regular support and supervision.

There are a range of ways to support and develop your Management Committee members, will help improve the overall effectiveness of your group.

Download: [Training and support for the Board](#)

Download: [Checklist for Induction of Management Committee Members](#)

Download: [New Members Info Sheet – Example 1](#)

Download: [New Members Info Sheet – Example 2](#)