

The little book of  
**Induction**

The  
CharityLearning  
Consortium



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By Gill Chester

The  
CharityLearning  
Consortium

**With thanks to**

Andy Lancaster, CIPD

Patrycja Nykiel and Philippa Reed,  
CIWF International

Matthew Perkins, Mencap

Paul Hodgkinson, saha

Kristopher Medlang, Shelter

Oana Arama, The Fostering Network

Tom Boyesen-Corballis,  
The Prince's Trust

Michelle Coates, World Vision UK

# Foreword

First impressions matter. Your initial experience when starting in an organisation not only has an impact on your integration but also your motivation.

Often, inductions focus solely on orientation and what organisations do. However, great inductions also support socialisation, to help people quickly connect and collaborate with others. Both are vital.

An effective induction has the employer and employee needs equally in mind, with creative activities and discussions on culture, values, health and safety, working environments, organisational structures and establishing a speedy route to role effectiveness.

Take care not to overdo it though: when it comes to induction, less can definitely be more. We all need just enough to establish a springboard for success.

**Andy Lancaster, CIPD**



How can you  
make people feel  
welcome in the  
digital age?

Matthew Perkins,  
Mencap

# Getting it right

Finding the right staff can be tricky, time consuming and expensive, so it's essential to give them the best possible start. A poor induction can leave them feeling overwhelmed, undervalued and even result in them leaving – and then you're back to square one.

The best inductions put people at the centre and use a drip-feed approach, so they don't overload them with information. If you're just sitting new starters in a classroom – or worse, in front of a screen on their own – with the aim of cramming as much information into them as possible, then it's time to think again.

This guide will give you lots of ideas to help design an induction that puts the needs of new starters first.

You might need  
courage to do things  
differently, but you  
don't need a big budget  
to drive innovation

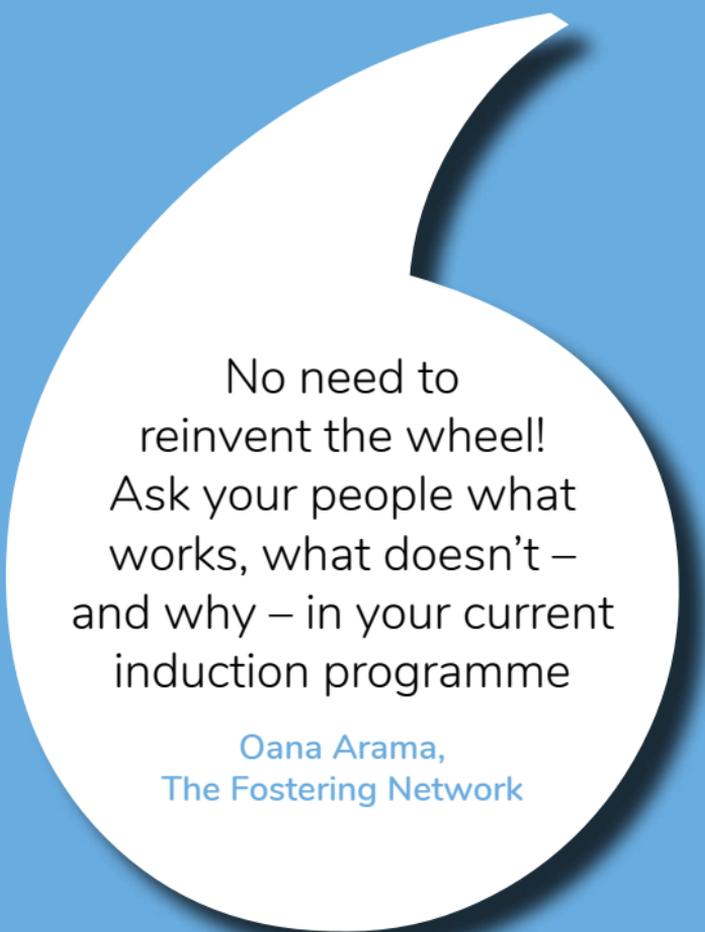
Martin Baker,  
Charity Learning  
Consortium

# People first

One of the biggest mistakes people make when designing induction is to think about it from the perspective of the organisation: what do we want to tell them, rather than what do they need to know, or how do we want them to feel.

## **Exercise: The right mindset**

Make a list of everything you think an organisation needs from a new starter, or wants to tell them. Ask a colleague to write a similar list but this time from the perspective of a new starter. What do they think people want and need from an induction? Compare the results.



No need to  
reinvent the wheel!  
Ask your people what  
works, what doesn't –  
and why – in your current  
induction programme

Oana Arama,  
The Fostering Network

# Rip off the plaster

Building your induction with people at the centre of your design will radically change the way you think about the whole process.

It's a good idea to create a small working party of stakeholders to support you.

Include people that have started in your organisation within the last year. Ask them about their experience, what they liked, what worked, what didn't, what they would have liked but didn't receive. You might be surprised by the results.

## **Exercise: Learn from mistakes**

When designing an induction programme, look at what you have already. List what you think is working and what isn't. Keep what's working but be brave and admit what needs to change.



CIWF International  
gives new starters a  
map of the local area,  
highlighting parking  
and local shops

# What should you include?

When designing your induction programme, you might find it useful to break it into elements. These will obviously vary for every role and organisation but might include:

- Corporate information about your organisation, its history, finance, and structure
- Organisational details about the culture, administration, policies, and regulations
- Personal information about their new team and role
- A focus on the skills needed to do that role

What might be required within each of these elements to meet new starters' needs? Decide how each of these might be met, and where they should be in the induction process.

Induction at  
World Vision UK  
has been streamlined,  
as new starters couldn't  
access the loo without  
a security card!

# Walk through their journey

Induction is more than just learning. Some admin will need to be completed, which is often cumbersome. Try following the journey a new starter takes, to identify where improvements can be made. This might include combining forms, moving them online or assigning a buddy to help navigate through the first few days.

## Case study: World Vision UK

World Vision UK started its induction transformation with the premise: let's try and eliminate anything that doesn't add value for the employee. L&D Manager Michelle Coates used a Kaizen approach to the challenges she faced. She put a group of stakeholders together, streamlined paperwork and processes, took induction out of the classroom and created welcoming videos with existing staff.

**Download this case study at [clc.link/induction](https://clc.link/induction)**

Don't lead  
with compliance.  
Yes, mandatory training  
has to be done, but don't  
make it someone's first  
experience of L&D

Martin Baker,  
Charity Learning  
Consortium

# First impressions count

How would you feel if you started work and couldn't access the toilets unless you had completed GDPR eLearning? Or had to wait six months to attend an induction? These are real life scenarios that charities have overcome.

Your induction speaks volumes about how people are valued: this is their first impression, so make it a good one.

## Case study: saha

There was no induction programme at saha, the Salvation Army Housing Association, when Paul Hodgkinson joined in 2019 to oversee L&D. He's created an online toolbox of resources for managers to use with new starters. His vision is for a consistent, sustainable induction run by managers themselves, so L&D can eventually step out of the way.



Thanks World Vision UK  
for an amazing first  
day at the office.  
What a welcome!

Tweet from  
a new starter

# Creating a good first impression

## Some ideas to get you thinking:

- Welcome buddies can really help with orientation. A buddy could be anyone, including line managers, as long as they can dedicate time on day one and beyond
- Ensure all materials look professional, well designed and on-brand
- Be creative with how you deliver content – you don't want their first impression of L&D to be deadly dull
- Email staff to introduce new starters, explaining their role. Ask new people to contribute with a quote and photo to personalise this
- Give new starters a welcome pack and/or gift
- Ensure mandatory training really is essential. Could this be integrated into their tasks? For example, shadowing someone, completing training, then carrying out the task alone



CIWF  
International  
starts its onboarding  
process as soon as  
people sign their  
contracts, which  
could be weeks  
before they  
start work

# Grab them while they're hot

Providing pre-induction materials is a great way to get people started while they are keen and receptive, and will hopefully help answer their queries too.

## A pre-induction might include:

- What will happen on the first day
- Dress code, floor plan, common or contractual working hours, and smoking, sickness and holiday policies
- Availability of refreshments, and recommendations for local shops and restaurants
- Overview of the induction process and their role in the process
- Introduction to the organisation

This could all be delivered as part of their formal job offer, with links to videos and eLearning.



Shelter  
invite all new  
starters to join Walking  
Wednesdays, when  
people get together  
for a walk during  
their lunch  
break

# No budget? No problem!

You don't need a big budget. Solutions could include:

- Social gatherings such as lunch and learns, coffee mornings or afternoon tea
- On the job coaching and job shadowing, with colleagues or other departments
- Meetings
- Videos created in-house
- Customer and supplier visits
- Audio clips and podcasts
- Webinars and live online learning
- Email
- Job aids
- Learning games, both digital and physical
- Online chat using forums like Skype or Slack



Human interaction  
is important.  
Remember that  
technology is a support  
tool, not a replacement  
for the human touch

Oana Arama,  
The Fostering Network

# Case study: The Fostering Network

Getting Started is a 90 day induction programme at The Fostering Network that is the result of feedback, review, and research.

When HR Manager Oana Arama finished reviewing the previous induction, it was clear a new programme should be built on three pillars: Readiness, Cost/Value and Consistency.

She used the eLearning platform as a strong and sustainable basis for the three pillars of the new programme. She also created useful online resources, produced an engaging video about the organisation and introduced staff to share their working experiences, all of which help to give new joiners a flavour of what it's like to work at the charity.



World Vision  
UK gives all new  
starters an induction  
pack, which includes  
useful things like  
coffee shop  
loyalty cards

# It's all in the blend

Try using a range of different delivery solutions for your self-paced elements.

## **A blended approach might include:**

- Welcome booklets
- How-to guides
- Bespoke eLearning modules
- How-to videos
- Charity Learning Consortium eLearning modules
- Face to face training
- Talking head videos

Pop any handouts into welcome packs or share at key points throughout induction. Digital elements can also be brought together in a course page on your LMS. This creates a digital 'one-stop shop' for learners to progress through and refer to, as and when they need to.



Don't put  
video on a pedestal.  
It's something that you'll  
get better at with practice,  
and thankfully - with  
smartphones - it's never  
been easier to start

Tom Boyesen-Corballis,  
The Prince's Trust

# In-house videos

Charities like The Prince's Trust, The Fostering Network and World Vision UK have created their own videos. They're a great way to engage staff.

Find video enthusiasts in your organisation and ask them to film different departments and teams to explain the work they do. Or get your smartphone out and create films yourself: you really don't need expensive kit.

Bespoke videos convey personality, rather than just facts, and give all important organisational context. Add them to your LMS and induction programme. You can even use QR codes to deliver these at key locations.

Video is also a great way to introduce new staff and volunteers to senior people, who may not be available to meet everyone individually.



World Vision UK  
holds an afternoon  
tea for new starters.  
What a fantastic idea!

# The human touch

Helping new staff integrate into your organisation is a vital part of ensuring they are happy and successful.

## Here are some ideas to support them:

- Forums and apps like WhatsApp allow people to share their experiences and ask questions
- Coffee mornings or cake sales, perhaps raising funds for your charity, can help new starters meet people from other teams
- Pairing new starters up with a buddy outside their team has various benefits. It can help them learn about all aspects of your organisation's culture, network with others, and helps avoid working in silos

Instead of running time-sensitive induction days, ask key people to run lunchtime sessions a couple of times a year for new and existing staff.



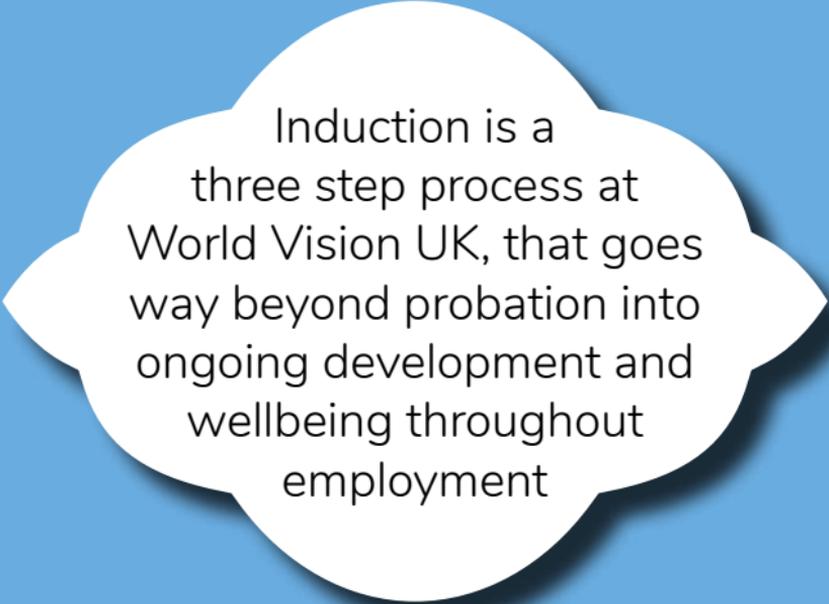
Shelter invites  
all staff to TED Talk  
Tuesdays. It's a great  
way for everyone  
to connect

# Thinking differently

Instead of pushing information onto new starters, as if they are the proverbial vessel to fill, find ways to get them to gather information themselves. The exercise below is just one example of how to do that.

## **Exercise: Passive to active learning**

Give new starters a sheet of staff pictures and ask them to add their names, as well as something they've learnt about each person. Include a range of levels, roles and locations. This turns learning into something active, rather than passive.



Induction is a  
three step process at  
World Vision UK, that goes  
way beyond probation into  
ongoing development and  
wellbeing throughout  
employment

# Induction is a personal journey

Why not present induction as a journey and give new starters a map of their induction that provides a visual guide. This could include key milestones and is a great visual alternative to an induction checklist.

Everyone is different, so leave gaps for people to tailor the programme themselves.

This allows people to focus on the aspects of their induction that are most important, on what's needed in practice rather than just generic skills.



Line managers  
are the 'engine' of  
organisations: building  
teams, encouraging  
performance, supporting well  
being, facilitating learning,  
monitoring progress  
and ensuring success

Andy Lancaster,  
CIPD

# Get managers on board

Support from line managers is vital. They'll be your weak link if they don't:

- See the benefits
- Dedicate the time needed
- Understand their role in the process

## Top tips

- When launching a new induction programme, provide training for all managers on the new process. Sell the benefits: make it clear that new starters will be more productive, effective and engaged more quickly
- Ensure everyone understands their role. For example, if new staff have to bring completed documents or questions to meetings, this will help remind managers of their role in ongoing induction



saha takes  
part in the annual  
Best Companies survey,  
which gives invaluable  
feedback to help  
shape everything  
they do

# Gather feedback

No organisation stands still, so you'll want to keep reviewing induction as your needs change. Gathering feedback from new starters is a really useful way to support this.

Ask for anonymous feedback at key points, such as the first week, month, three months and on completion.

Evaluation specialist Derek Mitchell suggests asking learners to describe any learning experience in just one word. This means you can compare different experiences using the same criteria. **Find out more at [clc.link/induction](https://www.clc.ac.uk/induction)**

Be proactive, and don't expect people to give you the answers you want. It may not be possible to follow up with everyone, but if you can, find out how they're doing, perhaps over a coffee. This personal touch can make all the difference.



Use marketing messages to explain that your online resources can help people work smarter, faster, better, and progress in their careers

Martin Baker,  
Charity Learning  
Consortium

# Reuse and recycle

Creating and curating online resources can take time. Ensure you get the biggest return on your investment by not branding or naming everything specifically for induction. These resources may be valuable to all staff and volunteers, so put them on your learning management system and make them open to all.

## Think about your marketing

Imagine the difference in take-up between a piece of eLearning that's called Corporate Induction vs 10 things you need to know about us. It's an easy trick that can make a big difference.

# About the Charity Learning Consortium

More than 190 charitable organisations benefit from collaborating with us.

Bringing charities together enables the Consortium to offer cost-effective, quality eLearning to more than a million people in the third sector across the UK.

More than that, our collaborative approach paves the way for eLearning success with ongoing support, fantastic networking opportunities, relevant workshops and an inspirational Charity Learning Conference & Awards.

**[charitylearning.org](http://charitylearning.org)**

When you've finished with this little book, please pass it on. If you pop it into recycling, just remove the front cover first. Made using paper from a certified sustainable source.

# About the author

## Gill Chester

Gill Chester is the founder and Director at Little Man Project. She has worked in learning and development for more than 20 years.



Little Man Project is an award winning eLearning design and development company that specialises in working with voluntary sector clients, to develop sustainable solutions to meet their L&D needs. This includes a programme of training and mentoring to help charities create eLearning in-house.

**[littlemanproject.com](http://littlemanproject.com)**

‘Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Together we are stronger than on our own’

Martin Baker  
Charity Learning Consortium

The  
Charity Learning  
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