



Welding of Induction Process

Abstract

This case study deals with chosen HR issues from a selected company operating in the welding industry. First, we will introduce the company, its HR processes and HR challenges. Its most important challenge is improving its induction process. First, the theoretical basis of this area is introduced. Based on the company's needs and other secondary data, the case study then suggests solutions. Some tools to improve the induction process are proposed, because if the induction process is not properly established, it can lead to rather large problems. One result is that more employees tend to leave jobs with poor induction processes during their first year. So how can it be fixed? Read this study and be inspired.

Introduction to the organisation and industry

The company was established in 1994 as a sister company, later as a subsidiary of a parent company residing in Germany. The Czech company has existed for 23 years and during this time the company has evolved from a small branch with only a few employees into a medium-sized company. The company's main business activity is the production of welding machines.



Figure 1: Welding machines produced by chosen company

Source: internal sources



HR processes in the company

The HR department consists of two officers. One of them manages recruitment, interviewing, employee attendance, and related activities. The other officer, who is also the executive director of the company, manages advertising for open positions, workforce planning, employee evaluations, employee satisfaction, the benefits system, and interviewing candidates for higher positions, etc.

Employee structure development

The company currently employs 245 employees, so based on the number of employees, it is a medium-sized enterprise. The company is a private for-profit family company. The employee structure is very balanced; all age groups are represented and a similar number of men and women are employed. Moreover, the company's workforce includes minorities, indicating that there is no discrimination and all employees in this company are tolerant.

A SWOT analysis of HR activities

The following figure shows the main strengths and weaknesses of the company's HR processes. The HR department very often uses internal recruitment, which is excellent because they are taking advantage of their current human resources. What is more, the company offers a lot of benefits to their own employees and also surveys employee satisfaction. The company is in the process of obtaining ISO certification, which can bring some improvements in HR. On the other hand, the company does not build its employer brand, does not use social media, and does not have talent management. In addition, they do not have an induction process.



Table 1: SWOT analysis of HR activities in the chosen company

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Internal recruitment	No induction process
Employee satisfaction surveys	No employer brand
Benefits	Does not use social media
ISO certification	Does not have talent management
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Cooperation with universities	A lack of qualified candidates
Cooperation with local groups	Unattractive location of the company
Cooperation with local authorities	Employees moving to Germany

Source: own elaboration

Objectives of case study

The objective of the case study is to help solve some of the HR challenges identified by analysing the processes within the company. The main objective is to implement a better induction process for all new employees.

Literature review

An induction programme is defined as the process of welcoming and training new employees when they join a company. It also includes giving them basic information about their work and about the company. This information can help the new employees to perform their work well in a shorter amount of time and make the beginning easier for them. The main goals of an induction programme are to:

- clarify the information about the work and the company from the very beginning so that there is nothing strange or unfamiliar for new employees,



- try to foster a good environment within the company in the minds of new employees, so they are more engaged and want to stay,
 - achieve quality output from new employees in the shortest possible time,
 - reduce the chance that new employees will leave the company soon after starting.
- (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014)

For young people, communication during the induction process is very important. It is necessary to give them all the information about their future job and life in the company, explain all the rules (written and unwritten), as well as procedures, etc. The usage of mentoring or coaching is appreciated by young employees because they can ask their mentor, coach, or superior for help or advice whenever they want and these people are willing and able to answer questions and provide help to the new employees (Horváthová, 2016).

Mentoring

New employees should work under a mentor, who is usually an effective, experienced employee with good communication skills and who passes down their knowledge and experience to the new employees (Šikýř, 2014). Mentoring places high demands on the mentor, because they have to be excellent in their work (so that they can properly initiate new employees), but moreover, they have to have good work habits and communication skills. The mentor should be a positive role model; thus, they are very important for young employees who are at the beginning of their careers. A mentor is also able to develop an employee's talent. If the process of mentoring is successful, it will lead to far quicker initial training and the quicker attainment of high levels of performance (Svobodová, 2015).

Methodology

The case study is based on literature review and analysis of the chosen company. The current induction process of the chosen company was analysed and the process was evaluated using primary and secondary data. Primary data (both qualitative and quantitative) were collected by a qualitative survey, shadowing and CAWI questionnaire. Other detailed information was also collected by interviewing the HR manager. Her experience and knowledge were the most important data for this case study. The author of this case study also spent several weeks on an internship in the company.



Findings and analysis

The company currently does not have an induction process with a welcome package for new employees. When new employees start with the company, the HR department introduces them to the basic processes, rules and customs that are common in the company, including:

- the structure of working hours,
- work breaks,
- ways of communicating with the HR department,
- initial training in occupational health and safety,
- accurate ways of calculating performance rewards.

After finishing all this training, new employees meet all colleagues and they are assigned one colleague who explains all duties and activities connected with their work. While this is a type of mentoring, it is not official mentoring. Sometimes, these employee-mentors do not perform their mentoring work as well as they should. The main problem is that the mentor-employees usually do not have enough time to help and lead the new employee and give the new employees the attention they need. These mentors do this work in addition to their day-to-day work, so new employees feel that they have to be dependent on themselves. Here are some of the causes of mentoring failure:

- the mentors are busy and do not have enough time,
- the mentors have a low level of professional knowledge,
- competing thoughts – they might see the new employee as a rival,
- differences in the personalities of the mentor and the new employee.

Unfortunately, new employee induction is not monitored in the company, and there are no employee evaluations to determine how quickly and effectively the new employees' settle in.



HR challenges

According to the information gained from an interview in the company, there are gaps in some of their HR activities. The induction process has been identified as the biggest current challenge and thus, will be the focus of this case study.

Proposed HR tools

The company would like to implement better induction processes for all new employees. Looking at the current induction process and according to the company's needs, here are some tools that could help to solve this problem:

- creating a mentoring plan,
- creating an evaluation form for evaluating the work performed by new employees (for superiors/mentors),
- creating a self-evaluation form that new employees can use for their own work (the same as the previous form),
- creating an evaluation form for obtaining feedback on the induction process (for employees).

All these tools are connected to the induction process. Some of the typical steps are shown in figure 2 below. It starts with hiring new employees, moves through administrative and entry formalities to the employee's introduction to their job and the company, to mentoring and teaching, to new employee evaluations, and ending with the evaluation of the entire induction process.

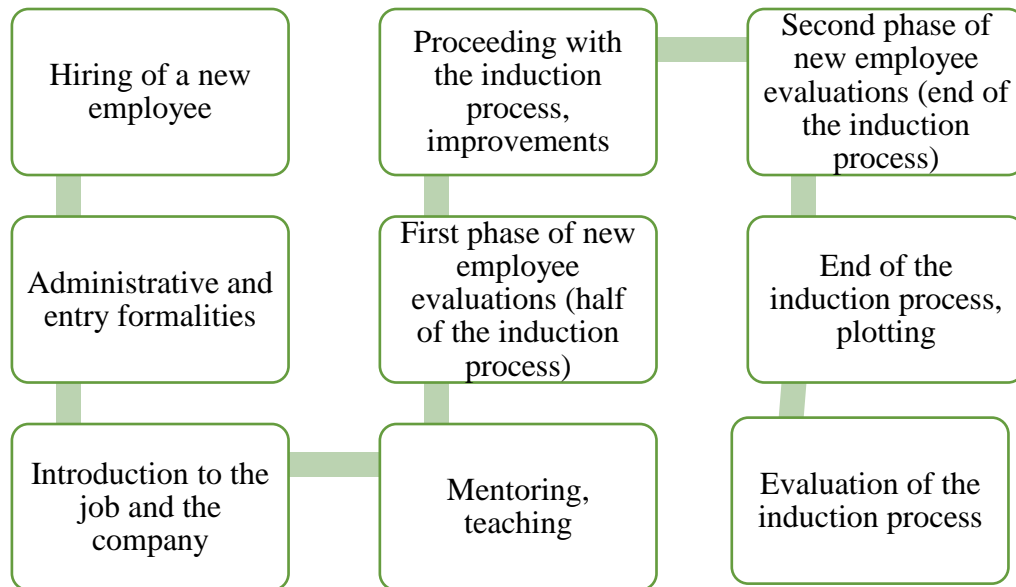


Figure 2: Step-by-step through the induction process

Source: own elaboration

Firstly, it is recommended that the company implements a mentoring system. As previously outlined in the theoretical part of the case study, it can be a very useful and effective way to teach new employees more quickly. Current employees will be asked to take a position as a mentor. If there are several candidates for this position, the best one will be selected (the best one means an employee with the most experience and best skills, knowledge, social, and communication skills and who is willing to do that job).

If there is no one willing to be a mentor, it is also possible to ask pensioners, soon-to-be-retiring employees, or employees on maternity leave to become a mentor. For these persons, mentoring would be a part-time job. It is very important to let employees sign up for mentoring themselves and not push them to take this position because it would not be as effective if they do not want to accept the position, but are still forced to. In fact, it may annoy them. Nevertheless, if they are willing to mentor new employees, they would be best for teaching their mentees, leading them and sharing their experience. This would be very effective.

For those who are current employees, are willing to be a mentor and are selected as the best ones by the HR department, here are 3 ways they can do their own work and also mentor:

- work overtime,
- do their mentoring while doing their current job, but be rewarded with some benefit,



- reduce their workload - divide part of their current work among other employees.

How the mentor performs their duties depends on the department. All departments are different, have different structures, and a different number of employees, so the selection of the process depends on each department in the company. It is planned that each worker's department will have at least one mentor and each administrative department will have only one permanent mentor. Nevertheless, all the chosen mentors from all departments should attend basic mentoring and communication training. This will help them to mentor correctly.

Mentors will spend at least two hours intensively per work day with each new employee during their whole probation period (three months or six months for executives). After this probation period and induction process, the mentors will be available to help their mentees and answer any questions. Thus, the mentors will be their support. For workers, mentors will be available for up to six months after they start their job, and for administrative staff, the mentors will be available for up to one year after they start their job.

Another objective of improving the induction process is being able to obtain employee evaluations, gradually during the probation period (three months or six months for executives), when employees are evaluated by their superior or mentor. They will evaluate how well the new employee has settled in, the quality of their work, how quickly they work, how efficient they are, and their behaviour. The new employees will self-evaluate their own work, skills, and behaviour in the same way. These evaluations will be performed as questionnaires. These evaluations will always take place one and a half months (or three months for executives) after the new employee joins the company and once more just before the end of the induction process.

So, both evaluations, i.e. the one by the superior/mentor and the one by the employees themselves, will be filled in twice. This allows for a comparison of the employee's work progress. If the evaluations were conducted more than twice, it would be too time consuming for the superiors/mentor. Moreover, neither the employee nor the superior/mentor are able to evaluate the work of a new employee after only three weeks. These two forms are attached as appendices:

- Appendix No. 2 – Employee evaluation form – induction process
- Appendix No. 3 – Employee self-evaluation form – induction process



Evaluations of new employees will be assessed, compared and, in case they are needed, some corrective measures for improving the new employee's work can be drawn up. All forms will be archived for some time so that they can be compared in the future with current evaluations of the employee. See the following figure.

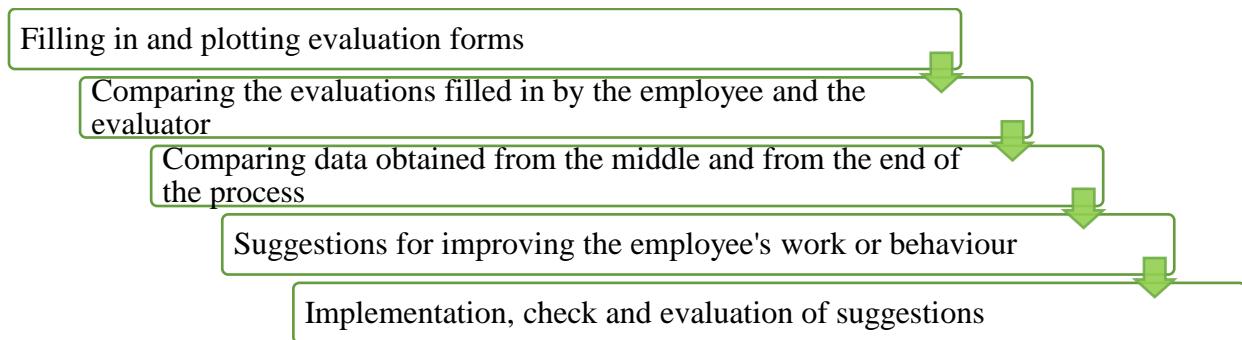


Figure 3: Use of employee evaluation and self-evaluation forms during the induction process

Source: own elaboration

Appendix No. 4 – Induction process evaluation, relates to the evaluation of this process by new employees who have just finished this induction process. It is a questionnaire in which the questions are related to the quality of the induction process. For example, how much it helped new employees to have the processes and procedures explained to them, if their induction was easy, etc. This evaluation will take place after the induction process, thus, after the probation period of three months (or six months for executives). It is recommended that some statistics based on the results from these questionnaires are taken and that the company monitors weaknesses determined in the induction process. The results of these questionnaires and statistics should help to improve the induction process and make it as efficient as possible. All forms will be archived for some time. In the future, after all aspects are implemented and improved, the induction process should be checked to see if the corrections made were effective.

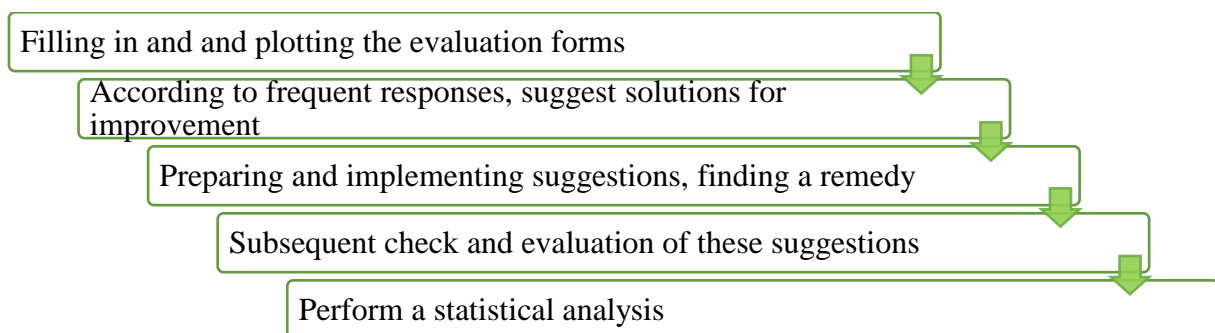


Figure 4: The use of the induction process evaluation form

Source: own elaboration



Conclusion

The case study deals with one HR issue in the selected company. Firstly, this SME was described together with the HR processes managed by the company's HR department and those not present in the company. The HR department is currently in a development phase, so they are working on filling existing gaps. However, the biggest need for improvement is the company's induction process. Therefore, this case study deals with this area of HR management. To better solve this problem, the theoretical bases of induction processes and mentoring were introduced. Using theoretical knowledge, some secondary data, and according to the needs and processes of the selected company, some solutions were proposed. First, it is recommended that the company implements a mentoring system. Mentors should be selected from among current employees who apply for this position. There needs to be many mentors, at least one in each department and they have to pass basic mentoring and communication training. All these mentors would be rewarded for their mentoring work. The selection of mentors would be different for each department.

The practical tools provided comprise three evaluation forms – employee evaluations by the superior/mentor during and after induction process, employee self-evaluations also during and after the induction process and an evaluation of the induction process by new employees who complete the process. These practical tools – the evaluation forms - were tailored to the needs of the company, so it is possible to use them immediately. This is especially true here because they were approved by the HR department. These evaluations should help to improve the induction process, meaning its structure and content, as well as improve new employee skills.

Appendices

- Appendix No. 1 – The use of evaluation forms
- Appendix No. 2 – Employee evaluation form – induction process
- Appendix No. 3 – Employee self-evaluation form – induction process
- Appendix No. 4 – Induction process evaluation



References

Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2014). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice*. Kogan Page Publishers.

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Šikýř, M. (2014). *Nejlepší praxe v řízení lidských zdrojů*. Grada Publishing, as.

Torrington, D., Hall, L. & Taylor, S. (1964). *Human Resource Management*. Essex.



Appendix No. 1 – The use of evaluation forms

EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORM – INDUCTION PROCESS.

1. Explain and introduce the evaluation system during the induction process to the new employees and to their superiors or mentors
 2. Fill it in both in the middle and at the end of the induction process
 3. Have the superior or mentor managing the new employee fill it in
 4. Plotting results – between the forms filled in both in the middle and at the end of the induction process
 5. Plotting results – between the forms filled in by the superior or mentor and by the new employees
 6. Suggestion of a solution or remedy for improving a new employee's work or behaviour
 7. Implement these suggestions
 8. Subsequently check and evaluate these suggestions
 9. Archive these forms
- ➔ See Appendix No. 2 – Employee evaluation form – induction process

EMPLOYEE SELF-EVALUATION FORM – INDUCTION PROCESS.

1. Explain and introduce the evaluation system during the induction process to the new employees and to their superiors or mentors
 2. Fill it in both in the middle and at the end of the induction process
 3. Have the new employee fill it in
 4. Plotting results – between the forms filled in both in the middle and at the end of the induction process
 5. Plotting results – between the forms filled in by the superior or mentor and by the new employees
 6. Suggestion of a solution or remedy for improving a new employee's work or behaviour
 7. Implement these suggestions
 8. Subsequently check and evaluate these suggestions
 9. Archive these forms
- ➔ See Appendix No. 3 – Employee self-evaluation form – induction process

INDUCTION PROCESS EVALUATION FORM

1. Explain and introduce the induction evaluation system to the new employees and to the superiors or mentors
2. Have new employees who complete the induction process fill in the form
3. Plotting results – evaluation of feedback; which parts of the induction process were evaluated positively and which were not
4. Note responses that are frequently repeated – these indicate problems
5. Suggest some improvements and remedies for the induction process based on the responses
6. Subsequently check and evaluate these suggestions
7. Compile some statistics based on the responses that can be used to make future improvements to the induction process and that can be used for making comparisons



8. Archive these forms
➔ Appendix No. 4 – Induction process evaluation

Appendix No. 2 – Employee evaluation form – induction process

EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORM – INDUCTION PROCESS

Employee data:

Name:	Position:
Work area/department:	

Superior data:

Superior's name:	Mentor's name:
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Please fill in the following employee evaluation form during the induction process. When filling in the form, consider your own opinion as a superior, but also consider qualitative and quantitative data related to the employee's performance. The evaluation should match the current status of employee's skills after the induction process.

ACHIEVING THE GOALS

Goals	Level of Achievement	Comment

Please mark the level that, in your opinion, best describes the new employee's skills and behaviour:



Organisation of work

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> systematically organises their work | <input type="checkbox"/> plans only sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plans only rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> does not plan |

Workload

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> quick | <input type="checkbox"/> adequate workload |
| <input type="checkbox"/> slow | <input type="checkbox"/> quick at the expense of quality |

Skill and dexterity

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> high skill and dexterity | <input type="checkbox"/> normal skill and dexterity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> low skill and dexterity | <input type="checkbox"/> unskilfulness |

Reactions in exacting and crisis situations

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> copes quickly with the situation | <input type="checkbox"/> copes slowly with the situation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> uncertain coping, slow reactions | <input type="checkbox"/> does not cope with the situation |

Behaviour towards colleagues/co-workers

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> willingness to help | <input type="checkbox"/> helps only sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> disinterest | <input type="checkbox"/> intolerance |

The level of initiative

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> above-average initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> average initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> very low initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> no initiative |

The level of responsibility

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> highly responsible | <input type="checkbox"/> responsible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fluctuating responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> irresponsible |



Cooperation in the team

- this employee benefits the team
- cooperation, but no initiative
- passive attitude, does not disturb the team
- inability to cooperate, disturbs the team

Only for administrative staff and executives

Usage of theoretical knowledge in practice

- uses often
- average usage
- uses occasionally
- no usage

Treatment and behaviour skills

- adequate treatment and respect
- adequate behaviour only with some people
- does not realise deficiencies
- almost no communication skills

Communication skills

- patient listener
- impatient when listening
- irritated reactions
- inability to listen to others

What are employee's main strengths?

In which area(s) should employee make improvement(s)?

Superior's or mentor's signature:

Date:

Employee's signature:

Date:



Appendix No. 3 – Employee self-evaluation form – induction process

EMPLOYEE SELF-EVALUATION FORM – INDUCTION PROCESS

Employee data:

Name:	Position:
Work area/department:	

Superior data:

Superior's name:	Mentor's name:
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Please fill in the following employee self-evaluation form based on your own opinion of your current skills and behaviour achieved because of the induction process.

ACHIEVING THE GOALS

Goals	Level of Achievement	Comment

Please mark the level that, in your opinion, best describes your skills and behaviour:

Organisation of work

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> systematically organise my work | <input type="checkbox"/> plan only sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plan only rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> do not plan |

Workload

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> quick | <input type="checkbox"/> adequate workload |
| <input type="checkbox"/> slow | <input type="checkbox"/> quick at the expense of quality |



Skill and dexterity

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> high skill and dexterity | <input type="checkbox"/> normal skill and dexterity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> low skill and dexterity | <input type="checkbox"/> unskilfulness |

Reactions in exacting and crisis situations

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> copes quickly with the situation | <input type="checkbox"/> copes slowly with the situation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> uncertain coping, slow reactions | <input type="checkbox"/> do not cope with the situation |

Behaviour towards colleagues/co-workers

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> willingness to help | <input type="checkbox"/> help only sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> disinterest | <input type="checkbox"/> intolerance |

The level of initiative

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> above-average initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> average initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> very low initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> no initiative |

The level of responsibility

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> highly responsible | <input type="checkbox"/> responsible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fluctuating responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> irresponsible |

Cooperation in the team

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I benefit our team | <input type="checkbox"/> cooperation, but no initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> passive attitude, does not disturb the team | <input type="checkbox"/> inability to cooperate, disturbs the team |

Only for administrative staff and executives

Usage of theoretical knowledge in practice

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> uses often | <input type="checkbox"/> average usage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> uses occasionally | <input type="checkbox"/> no usage |



Treatment and behaviour skills

- adequate treatment and respect
- adequate behaviour only with some people
- do not realise deficiencies
- almost no communication skills

Communication skills

- patient listener
- impatient when listening
- irritated reactions
- unable to listen to others

What are your main strengths?

In which area(s) do you think you should make improvement(s)?

Are you satisfied with your current position? If your answer is NO, which other position would better suit you?

Employee's signature:

Date:

Accepted by (name and signature):

Date:



Appendix No. 4 – Induction process evaluation

INDUCTION EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Employee data:

Name:	Position:
Work area/department:	

Superior data:

Superior's name:	Mentor's name:
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PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- 1. Have the appropriate policies and procedures important for your job (e.g. health and safety regulations, work processes, superiors, ...) been shown to you and explained to you?**

YES NO

Comment:

- 2. Were you personally introduced to your new colleagues, managers, and other appropriate people during your first few days in your new post?**

YES NO

Comment:

- 3. Do you think you have been made to feel very welcome in the company or in your department?**

YES NO

Comment:

- 4. Have you met all the members of your team and others with whom you work closely?**

YES NO

Comment:



5. Do you feel you are part of the team?

YES NO

Comment:

6. Has your induction helped you to better understand your job, responsibilities, and performance standards?

YES NO

Comment:

7. Do you think the induction process has helped you to do your job more effectively?

YES NO

Comment:

8. What aspects/parts of your induction were the most useful and why?

Please write:

9. Do you feel there was any part that could be improved or that was missing from your induction process?

YES NO

If the answer is YES, please explain:

10. Can you identify other information/advice/resources, which could have been useful to you during your induction?

Please write:

11. What is your overall impression/reaction to your induction process?

very low level standard very high level

12. Any other comments:

Employee's signature:

Date:

Superior's signature:

Date:

Mentor's signature:

Date: