

Evacuation and Emergency

- Procedures clear
- The named first aider is?
- Volunteer Insurance
- First aid box and Accident book location

Other

List anything else you think you should cover in your volunteer induction.

- _____
- _____
- _____



Further Information and Resources

For further information on writing volunteer roles, writing role descriptions and person specification contact the Volunteer Officer at Voluntary and Community Action or review the following resources:

- The Good Practice Guide for Everyone who Works with Volunteers, K Bowgett, K Dickie and M Restall, Volunteering England, 2nd Edition, 2002.
- Volunteer England website, www.volunteering.org.uk

- Creating Volunteer Roles, Descriptions and Person Specifications
- Writing a Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Risk Assessments
- Volunteer Insurance
- Marketing your Volunteering Opportunities
- Recruiting Volunteers
- Recruiting Trustees
- The Criminal Records Bureau and Screening of Paid Staff and Volunteers
- Dealing with Volunteer Problems
- Volunteer Expenses
- Volunteering and State Benefits

Other Information Sheets in this series include:



Voluntary and Community Action

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How can the Volunteer Centre help?

If you are a voluntary organisation or community group operating in southern Bedfordshire, we can help by:

- promoting your volunteering opportunities and signposting volunteers to your organisation
- providing information, guidance and training in all aspects of good practice and volunteer management.

Please give us a call on 01525 850559 or email volunteer@action-centralbeds.org.uk to arrange a meeting.

Voluntary and Community Action

Induction of Volunteers

Volunteering Information Sheet No.9

March 2009

The induction of a new volunteer is the first real experience that person may have of your organisation. Make it a positive one!

What is an Induction?

Induction is a planned training programme to help a new volunteer settle down quickly. People can be very nervous when they start a new volunteer role, just as they would if they were starting a new job. A warm welcome to a new volunteer showing that you were expecting them is the best greeting that someone can have.

Remember, that for the first few weeks they are with you, volunteers will still be making up their mind about whether they want to stay with the organisation. By using the induction to help them work through this process, you are more likely to find out about their interests and end up with a committed and happy volunteer.

Often volunteers have lots of enthusiasm but little information. Good induction should ensure that the volunteer:

- settles into a new environment
- understands how their role relates to the rest of the organisation and what is expected of them
- understands the culture of the organisation
- develops the knowledge and skills they need to do the job
- becomes an effective member of the team as quickly as possible.

Induction can also give volunteers more confidence, and help set 'ground rules' that encourage all volunteers to work to the same principles.

How is an Induction Carried Out?

How an induction is carried out will depend on the size and nature of the organisation and on the type of opportunity and level of responsibility required. However, even in the smallest organisation the induction should be planned to make sure that new volunteers are given the welcome, information and support they need.

It is best if one person has responsibility for arranging the induction and making sure everyone who will be sharing in the induction knows what they are supposed to be doing and when.

It can be a good idea to talk to the volunteer on their first day about what you hope to cover in their induction period. Provide an induction checklist to help them follow through everything you will cover (see page 3) By explaining what they will be doing over the next few weeks you will put them at their ease. On their first day you will probably want to keep things very basic.

Volunteering Information Sheets

The Volunteer Centre has produced a series of Information Sheets on:

- setting up and managing a volunteer programme
- recruitment and development of volunteers and trustees.



They are available to download from our website or by contacting the Volunteer Centre (details on back page).





You may want to:

- introduce them to other staff and volunteers
- show them round the building (where they can put their things, where the toilets are, where they can make a drink etc.)
- explain who they can go to if they have any questions or problems
- show them where they will be working and where they can find the equipment they need
- let them know about breaks and where they can buy food
- explain how they can claim expenses.

These are all fairly informal things but they are important because they help the volunteer feel comfortable. Once the volunteer feels more relaxed in their new environment you can explain the more formal and complex issues about your organisation and the way it works. These may include:

- Volunteer Policy
- Health and Safety, including fire procedures, first aid and personal safety
- the values of the organisation and how it is managed
- Equal Opportunities
- Volunteer Complaints Procedure
- policies covering child protection and vulnerable adults
- confidentiality
- Volunteer Agreement, what the volunteer can expect from you and what you expect in return, e.g. days and times to work
- support and supervision.

It may be tempting to just hand over a file of policies, but by going

through them with the volunteer you can be on hand to answer any questions they may have. It also makes it easier for anyone with limited literacy or English who might otherwise be too embarrassed to ask for help.

Many organisations find it useful to have a volunteer handbook or pack that contains all the information the volunteer needs. When preparing it, ask current volunteers what information they would have found useful. Avoid making it too large. It is better to cover all the basic information simply and clearly and to signpost volunteers to where they can find out more if needed.

The rest of the induction will vary from one organisation to another but may involve information and training in areas such as:

- use of equipment such as computers or photocopiers
- how to answer the telephone
- dealing with clients
- record keeping.

Make it fun!

Induction does not have to be all talk whilst the volunteer listens. Other methods to try are:

- quizzes
- videos
- written information, a handbook or leaflets
- letting new volunteers shadow staff or other volunteers
- allowing them to try out tasks in different parts of the organisation
- encouraging them to attend any events the organisation might be involved with
- inviting them to any social events.

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Induction Checklist

Many organisations find it very useful to have a checklist of activities and information for all new volunteers to complete. This helps to ensure that all the key elements of the induction process are covered. A checklist may include the following:

Meeting Key People

- Introduction to manager and their role
- Introduction to supervisor and their role
- Introduction to immediate colleagues

Finding my Way Around

- Tour of building or site
- Tour of neighbourhood (if appropriate)
- Security arrangements
- Food and refreshments
- Other facilities

Understanding the Organisation

- History, aims, mission and work
- How my work fits in
- Management structure and decision-making explained
- How volunteers can feed back
- Confidentiality rules
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Other key policies e.g. child protection

Volunteering

- A clear volunteer role description
- Meet other volunteers
- Any paperwork requirements?
- Arrangements for time off/absence
- Volunteer Complaints Procedures
- Supervision arrangements
- Discussed my training needs/arrangements
- Inform about voluntary and state benefits if applicable

Health & Safety

- Health & Safety Policy
- Protective clothing issued (if required)
- Training in use of equipment/tools
- Hazards explained/pointed out

... continued overleaf



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MANY ORGANISATIONS FIND IT USEFUL TO HAVE A VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK OR PACK OTHER CONTAINS ALL THE INFORMATION THE VOLUNTEER NEEDS. WHEN PREPARING IT, ASK CURRENT VOLUNTEERS WHAT INFORMATION THEY WOULD HAVE FOUND USEFUL. QUALITIES.