

7

CHAPTER

Placement, Induction and Socialisation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter you will learn :

- 7.1 Concept of Placement
- 7.2 Concept of Induction or Orientation
- 7.3 Objectives of Induction
- 7.4 Advantages of Formal Induction
- 7.5 Induction in Indian Industries
- 7.6 Contents of Induction Programme
- 7.7 How to Make Induction Effective
- 7.8 Socialisation

■ Summary

■ Test Questions

ONCE AN EMPLOYEE has been selected, he should be placed on a suitable job. Putting the right man at the right job is as important as hiring the right person. A misplaced employee remains dissatisfied and frustrated. After putting the selected candidates on proper jobs, it is necessary to make them familiar with the job, the company and the other employees so that they feel at home and can concentrate on their work.

7.1 Concept of Placement

Placement is the process of assigning a specific job to each one of the selected candidates. It involves assigning a specific rank and responsibility to an individual. It implies matching the requirements of a job with the qualifications of a candidate. In the words of Pigors and Myers, "Placement is the determination of the job to which an accepted candidate is to be assigned, and his assignment to that job. It is

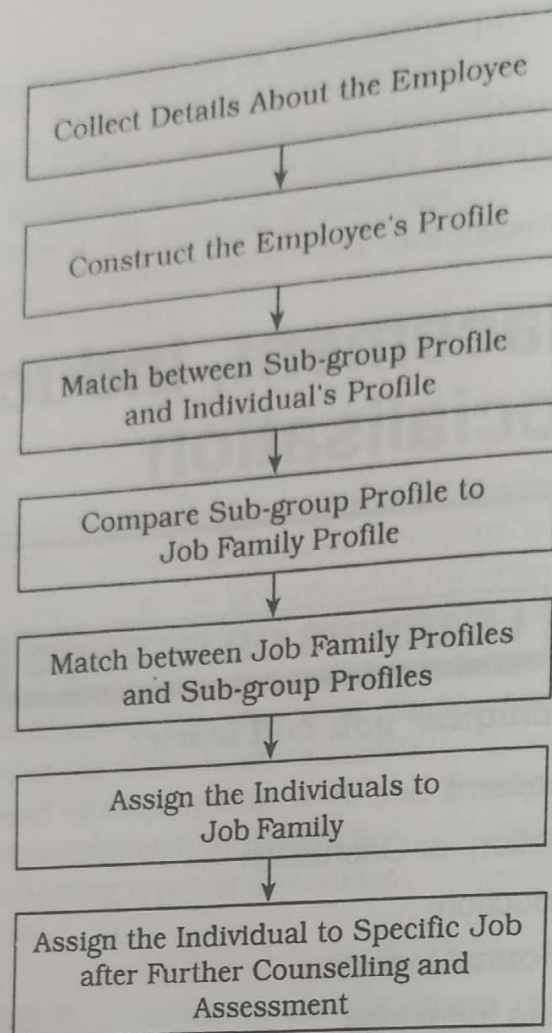


FIGURE 7.1 : Process of Employee Placement

Source : Wayne F. Cascio and Elios M. Award, *Human Resource Management*, p. 265.

a matching of what the supervisor has reason to think he can do with the job demands. It is a matching of what he imposes in strain, working conditions, and what he offers in the form of payroll, companionship with others, promotional possibilities, etc."¹ Proper placement helps to improve employee morale. It also helps to reduce employee turnover, absenteeism and accident rates. If a candidate adjusts himself to the job and continues to perform as per expectations, it might mean that the candidate is properly placed. However, if the candidate has problems in adjusting himself to the job and he continues to perform below expectations, he might be misplaced. Supervisors/executives should review all such cases to find out cases of misplacement. Such candidates should be assigned some other more suitable jobs. Alternatively, they may be given further training to make them fit for the job.

7.2 Concept of Induction or Orientation

When a new employee joins an organisation, he is completely a stranger to the people, work place and the work environment. Therefore, he is likely to feel insecure, shy and nervous. In the absence of information and support there is likely to be anxiety and fear in his mind. He may undergo *reality shock* caused by a gap between his

1. Paul Pigors and Charles Myers : *Personnel Administration*, 1973, p. 285.

PLACEMENT, INDUCTION AND SOCIALISATION

expectations and the real situation. Induction or orientation can help overcome these problems. Once an employee is selected and placed on an appropriate job, the process of familiarising him with the job and the organisation begins. This process is called induction or orientation or indoctrination or assimilation.

TABLE 7.1 : Distinction between Placement and Induction

<i>Basis of Distinction</i>	<i>Placement</i>	<i>Induction</i>
1. Meaning	It is the process of putting an employee on a specific job and location	It is the process of making a new employee familiar with the total work environment
2. Time period involved	It does not take place over more than a day	It usually takes place over more than a day
3. Nature	It is an event	It is a sequence of activities
4. Stage	It precedes induction	It succeeds placement

Orientation or induction is "the process of receiving and welcoming an employee when he first joins a company and giving him the basic information he needs to settle down quickly and happily and start work."¹ The new employee is introduced to the job, the coworkers and the organisation. The purpose of orientation is to make the new entrant feel at home and develop a sense of pride in the organisation and commitment to the job. The newcomer is explained his duties and responsibilities, company policies and rules, and other relevant information to get acquainted and accommodated with the organisation. Orientation is, therefore, the process of indoctrination, welcoming, acclimatisation, acculturation and socialisation.

A new problem which companies face in hiring is 'no-show' which means candidates accepting job offer but do not join duty.

7.3 Objectives of Induction

Orientation helps to reduce labour turnover and absenteeism. It also reduces start up time and costs. It develops realistic expectations and reduces anxiety. It prevents a worker from falling a prey to subversive elements which thrive on creating labour unrest by misrepresenting employers to illiterate employees. Induction is particularly important in a country like India where the new worker from rural areas finds himself completely at sea in an industrial town. Proper orientation enables the new employee to get off to a good start and to develop his overall effectiveness on the job. Thus, an orientation programme is designed to achieve the following objectives :

- (i) To help the newcomer overcome his natural shyness and nervousness in meeting new people in a new environment.
- (ii) To build up the new employee's confidence in the organisation and in himself so that he may become an efficient employee.
- (iii) To develop among the newcomers a sense of belonging and loyalty to the organisation.

1. Michael Armstrong : *Handbook of Personnel Management*, 1976, p. 160.

- (iv) To foster a close and cordial relationship between the newcomers and old employees and their supervisors.
- (v) To ensure that the newcomers do not form false impression and negative attitude towards the organisation or the job because first impression is the last impression.
- (vi) To give the newcomers necessary information such as location of cafeteria, toilets and locker room; rest periods and leave rules, etc.

Every organisation has an obligation to make integration of the individual into it as smooth and comfortable as possible. Small organizations may do it through informal orientation by the employee's immediate supervisor whereas large organisations usually develop formal orientation programmes. Such a programme consists of a tour of the plant or the office, a talk on the history and background of the organisation, a short discussion with a human resource officer and distribution of company handbook or manual. Lectures, film slides, group seminars and employee handbooks are used in formal orientation.

7.4 Advantages of Formal Induction

1. Induction helps to build up a two-way channel of communication between management and workers.
2. Proper induction facilitates informal relations and teamwork among employees.
3. Effective induction helps to integrate the new employee into the organisation and to develop a sense of belonging.
4. Induction is helpful in supplying information concerning the organisation, the job and employee welfare facilities.
5. Proper induction reduces employee grievances, absenteeism and labour turnover. A large proportion of labour turnover occurs during the early weeks of employment because no effort is made to make newcomer feel at home. Instead of letting the new employee learn through trial and error a formal and systematic induction programme should be arranged. Such a programme will avoid the possibility of new employee acquiring a wrong impression. The first impression on the employee's mind is very critical.
6. A formal induction programme proves that the company is taking a sincere interest in getting him off to a good start.
7. Induction helps to develop good public relations. Public relations begin at home when new employees are convinced that what is good for the company is ultimately in their own interest. Through induction new employees develop confidence in the company and in themselves.

7.5 Induction in Indian Industry

Induction has been one of the most neglected areas of human resource management in Indian industries. Very little is done for systematic induction of a new employee in an industrial unit. The newcomer is generally expected to know the enterprise through trial and error and stumble his way in the organisation. In Indian industry,

induction is necessary particularly for rural workers, young persons and management trainees. A rural worker joining a factory for the first time has to adjust not only to his work environment but also to a new social environment. When a young person above the age of 14 years joins, the aged workers might resent. Proper induction will help to develop a rapport between the old and the new employees. Graduates from management schools find it difficult to adjust themselves with traditional management style in family owned companies. Induction is required to help them adjust to a new work culture.

Thus, "induction has a greater significance in a developing country like India, where the percentage of illiteracy is very high. The worker finds himself completely at sea when by force of circumstances he has to shift from rural surroundings into an industrial unit. It is no use trying to push a handbook of certified rules and regulations into his hands and expecting him to turn out into a loyal and efficient employee. He needs a short and simple induction conducted by someone who speaks his own language. This will go a long way in reducing turnover and, above all, in preventing a worker from the likelihood of falling a prey to subversive elements who thrive on creating labour unrest by misrepresenting employees to illiterate employees."¹

EOP Module at a Glance

General Orientation Programme. Covers the organisation's history, mission, goals, policies, structure, benefits, products, customer's profile and other human resource policies.

Specific Job Orientation. Provides an in-depth information on what is expected of the person and his general accountabilities.

Departmental Orientation. Normally done by departmental heads, it covers departmental objectives, team goals, etc.

Buddy System. Where a buddy is an experienced person who understands the organisation and is willing and able to assist the newcomer. New employees are allocated a buddy who in turn guides the employee.

Plus Points

For Employees

- A chance to get a clearer picture of the organisation with a comprehensive introduction to its culture and philosophy.
- Introductions to relevant people, which make it easier for new recruits to approach them subsequently.
- Time to settle in, learn and capture information, before expectations on the deliverables begin to come in.

For the Organisation

- A chance to spend important, initial time with new employees in order to get to know him/her better hence set expectations accordingly.
- A system that ensures new hires are well-settled and productive at a faster pace. Puts them higher-up on the organisation's learning curve.
- Helps keep the groups and departments in shape, and updated on their procedures and policies, since they are expected to share the details regularly.

1. R.P. Billimoria : "Induction in Industry" in *Readings in Personnel Management*, IIPM Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1970, p. 94.

7.6 Contents of Induction Programme

A formal induction programme should provide information concerning the following:

1. Brief history and operations of the company.
2. Products and services of the company.
3. The company's organisation structure.
4. Location of departments and employee facilities.
5. Policies and procedures of the company.
6. Rules, regulations and daily work routines.
7. Grievance procedures.
8. Safety measures.
9. Standing orders and disciplinary procedures.
10. Terms and conditions of service including wages, working hours, overtime, holidays, etc.
11. Suggestion schemes.
12. Benefits and services for employees.
13. Opportunities for training, promotions, transfers, etc.

A formal orientation programme may be spread over from a day to a fortnight. Induction involves, two sub-processes : (a) acquainting the new employee with his new surroundings, and (b) indoctrinating him in the philosophy of the enterprise. The essence of indoctrination is to convince the employee that he is working for a good company and for a good cause. It is necessary to answer any questions and clarify any doubts that the newcomer may have about the job and the organisation.

A typical orientation programme should consist of three steps. *First*, general information about the history and operations of the organisation is provided by the human resource department. Its purpose is to help an employee build up some pride and interest in the organisation. During general orientation, information is also given on specific employee services, such as pension, health and welfare facilities and safety programmes. *Secondly*, specific orientation relating to the job and work unit members is given by the job supervisor. The employee is introduced to other employees, shown his place of work, informed of the location of canteen and toilets, rest rooms, etc. The purpose of specific orientation is to enable the new employee adjust himself to his work and the environment. It is possible that much of the instructions given to an employee in the beginning may not stick in his mind. Periodic follow-up is required to ensure that the employee is properly placed and feels at home. *Thirdly*, follow up orientation is undertaken to know the employee's feelings and to remove the difficulties faced by him through personal talks, guidance and counselling. It may be coordinated by the joint efforts of job supervisor and the human resource department.

7.7 How to Make Induction Effective

The following guidelines may be helpful in making orientation more effective :

- (i) Human side is the most important part of orientation. Therefore, first of all the new employee should be introduced to the people with whom he will

work—his colleagues, superiors and subordinates. A tea party may be arranged for this purpose.

- (ii) Make the new employee aware of the general company policies that apply to him as well as the specific work situation and requirements.
- (iii) Administer smaller doses of information over a period of time rather than giving everything on a single day. Orientation should be a gradual process.
- (iv) Answer any questions and clarify any doubts that the employee may have about the job and the organisation.
- (v) Provide on-the-job instructions, and counselling.
- (vi) Keep in close touch with the new employee to check back how he is doing and offer help if required.
- (vii) Allow reasonable time to adapt to the new work environment and job demands.

Orienting Them The Right Way

Several HR professionals feel that a company should have a formal, two-level orientation process, starting with a general orientation and ending with a more specific department orientation. The general orientation can be taken care of by the HR department while the departmental orientation should ideally be handled by someone senior from the department. The general orientation should include at least these basic things :

- Introducing the new employee with at least all the key senior people in the company and with all department heads.
- Running them through the company's history and its operations.
- Explaining the administrative systems and procedures to them properly and what formalities they are expected to complete in the first few weeks.
- Telling them about the assistance available within the company that they can tap.
- Introducing them with people who can informally brief them about the company's culture.
- Organising informal lunches and dinners in which the new employee gets to know a handful of key colleagues from other departments.

The departmental orientation should be designed to get the new employee in sync with the rest of the department. One way of doing this is to have someone senior within the department being formally assigned as a mentor or guide to the new employee for a specified time. During this time, they can run the new employee through the departmental systems, procedures as well as the informal rules and guidelines followed within the department.

Source : *Business World*.

Ideally induction should be managed by a senior leader, perhaps a member of the management committee, or even the CEO or MD, and the managers who will actually deal with the new recruits. Their engagement will reveal that the new recruits matter; they are not simply fresh meat for the factory. It will show how serious the organisation is about new talent. Who knows the future leader, the future innovator, sits amongst these newbies? Corporate inductions at best can make the new employees more familiar, and even comfortable, with the new organisation. So it is good to focus on data — what is the vision of the company, its history, its many

branches, its structure, its goals, its way forward. It is also of value to show the trainees what the future can be for them — maybe success stories of long-term employees, those who get long-service awards. It is also of value to give them a kit that enables them to find their way around the new office (where is the toilet and lunch room), and the rules of the new set up (how to submit bills).

Some corporate create the 'buddy' system where a person who is a year or two into the system hand holds the new guy. Another key method is to eat food together. With meals come informal conversations that help us know each other more emotionally. Of course, these conversations cannot be choreographed; there will be negative views also expressed. The point is not to create a mechanical process — outsourced to the HR department — but to get the stakeholders who benefit from the new trainee to form the early bonds of a relationship.

7.8 Socialisation

Socialisation is the process of adaptation. It is the process by which new employees attempt to learn and inculcate the norms and values of work roles in an organisation. Learning and inculcating the norms and values of work group are necessary for proper adjustment and job performance.

Some people treat induction and socialisation as synonymous. However, the two are different in some respects. Induction is in fact, only a part of socialisation. Induction is confined to new recruits whereas socialisation also covers, cases of transfer and promotion.

Socialisation is based on several assumptions : (i) new employees suffer from anxiety and require adjustment, (ii) socialisation strongly affects employee performance and stability of the organisation.

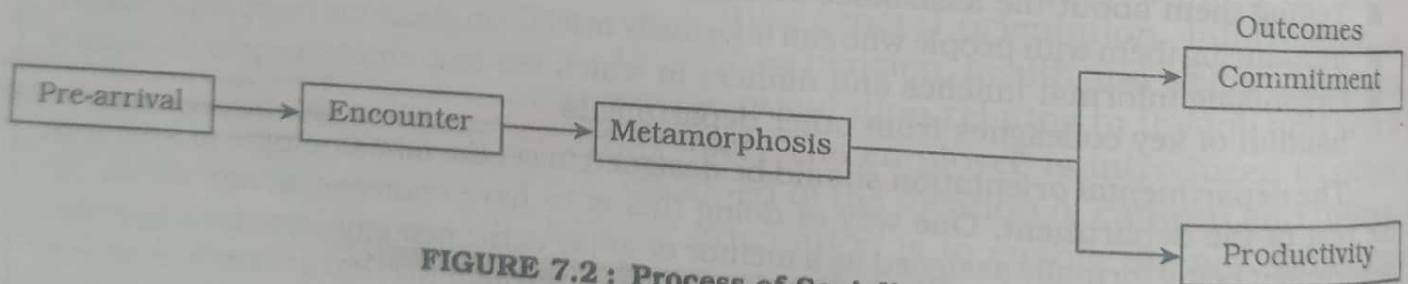


FIGURE 7.2 : Process of Socialisation

The socialisation process consists of the following stages :

1. Pre-arrival Stage. The pre-arrival stage recognises that all the new recruits arrive in the organisation with a set of values, norms, expectations and learning. These include both the work to be done and the organisation. For example, in business schools, students acquire certain ideas regarding the nature of their future jobs, pay packages and career progress. At the recruitment stage, many organisations give job previews which helps the prospective employees to learn more about the job and the organisation.

2. Encounter Stage. When the new employee joins the organisation, he encounters the realities of the situation in terms of his job, work culture, superiors,

subordinates and peers. If the expectations of the individual are in tune with the organisational realities, he adapts to the organisation quickly. On the other hand, if there is a marked difference between expectations and realities, socialisation is essential to replace his previous assumptions with realities. At the other extreme, the individual cannot reconcile with the values and norms of the organisation and quits the job.

3. Metamorphosis Stage. In this stage, the new employee acquires the skills required to adjust with the values and norms of the organisation. He brings necessary changes in his attitudes and role behaviour to suit the organisation's culture. Such changes make the employee self-confident and he feels accepted by other members of the organisation. The completion of socialisation process is characterised by feelings of competence in the job and commitment to the organisation.

Several methods are used for socialisation. Stories, rituals, material symbols, language are the main means by which new recruits learn the norms and values of an organisation. *Stories* are informal and oral narration of events about the organisation and its founder. *Rituals* convey the key values of the organisation. For example, functions held to honour top performers convey that high performance is considered extremely important. *Material* symbols, e.g., room size, name plates, reserved parking, dress, etc. convey specific meanings. Many organisations use language as a means to indicate their specific cultural aspects.

SUMMARY

1. Placement is the process of putting an employee on a specific job so as to match employee skills with the requirements of the job.
2. Induction is the process of familiarising new employees with the organisation and the job.
3. Induction is aimed at integrating new employees into the organisation.
4. Induction helps to further the interests of both the organisation and the new employee.
5. Induction has not been given due attention in Indian industry.
6. A formal induction programme provides all the necessary information to the new employee.
7. Proper welcome, gradual instruction, sincere interest, continuous touch and patience are required for the successful induction of a new employee.
8. Socialisation is an adaptation process comprising three stages — pre-arrival, encounter and metamorphosis.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by placement? Describe its significance.
2. What is induction? Explain its objectives.
3. Discuss the importance of proper induction of newly recruited employees, with particular reference to India.
4. Explain the contents of an employee induction programme.
5. Suggest measures for making induction successful.