

## **Induction / initial training for disabled people**

In this section you will find information on the following:

Work place support

Customs and practice

## Induction / initial training for disabled people

There are a number of ways in which an induction process can be made more accessible to a new employee.

It is good practice to give an induction to all new employees. The induction is likely to be the new recruit's first chance to meet colleagues, find his or her way around the premises and to learn about your organisation. Everything will be new and unexpected issues may arise.

The employer may have to make adjustments to ensure a disabled person is introduced into a new working environment in a clearly structured and supported way, with an individually tailored induction/training programme if necessary.

### **Work place support**

There are a number of ways in which an induction and initial training process can be made more accessible to a new employee with a disability. Employers should consult with the person concerned and with their support worker, if applicable. Where an employment support service has been involved in the recruitment process, a support worker will often come into the workplace to find out what is involved in the job. They then work out the best way for the disabled person to be inducted into their post.

Some disabled people may take longer than other employees to settle into a job and a longer induction period may be appropriate. This is particularly relevant when reasonable adjustments are being tried out. Often, an induction period involves the new employee shadowing or being supported by a more experienced employee for a specified period of time. This works particularly well for disabled people.







### **Customs and practice**

Most organisations have ‘unwritten rules’ about interaction between colleagues (such as who makes the coffee, where employees sit at breaks, when it’s okay to interrupt someone in their work). Some people will come into a workplace and pick these rules up quickly and easily; others, such as someone with a learning disability or someone on the autistic spectrum may find it more difficult. Be aware of the ‘unwritten rules’ of your workplace and be prepared to explain these to a new employee with a disability. Do not assume employees with certain disabilities will automatically pick up these ‘unwritten rules’.

Sometimes a taken-for-granted workplace practice can put a disabled person at a disadvantage. It will be important in these circumstances to recognise that an adjustment is required, rather than blaming the disabled person for not being able to fit in.

## **EXAMPLE**

A small building firm usually hands out written copies of all its policies by way of induction to new employees, and gives them half a day to read the documentation and to raise any questions with their line manager. A new employee has dyslexia and the employer arranges for her supervisor or a support worker, if appropriate, to spend a morning with her talking through the relevant policies.

## **EXAMPLE**

When a person with autism starts a job or takes on new responsibilities, clear and structured training is invaluable. Rather than saying ‘give everybody a copy of this’, say ‘make three photocopies of this, and give one each to Laura, Vikki and Sean’. You may also choose to provide written instructions. It can be helpful to ask the employee to repeat back instructions so you are sure they have understood.