**MVN’s Tips On Delivering Great Volunteer**



**Inductions Remotely**

Here are some tips on what to consider when inducting new Volunteers now that we’re all working remotely due to the impact of the coronavirus (Covid19). It’s vital to get new Volunteers up to speed as quickly as possible so they can start to feel comfortable and confident in their new role and can start contributing.

Effective inductions are timely, organized and engaging, and should give a good first impression of your organisation. They should set out your organisation's [mission and vision](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_90.htm) for them, and educate them about the company's history, [culture](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newSTR_55.htm)  and [values](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/understanding-workplace-values.htm) . They also provide them with valuable information such as "who's who" in the Organisation.

**Planning an Induction**

There are several important questions to ask when you are designing a Volunteer induction program. These include:

* How experienced is your new Volunteer? It's important to tailor your approach depending on who you're inducting, so that the program is fit for purpose.
* What first impression do you want to give?
* What do new Volunteers need to know about the work environment and any remote working arrangements you have now had to put in place?
* What policies and procedures should you show them?
* How can you introduce new Volunteers to other Volunteers and Colleagues without overwhelming them and in a timely manner when doing remotely?
* What do you need to provide them with (equipment, training and so on) so that they're ready to go from day one?

**What to Cover on Your Volunteer Induction**

It is important to remember that the key elements of a good Volunteer Induction remain the same as before, it’s just how they are delivered that will be different.

In advance of their induction ensure you have communicated regularly with them on how the remote induction is going to work. Make sure you have shared contact info and joining instructions for the session in enough time so that they can have a practice if they have not used any of the main platforms before EG: Zoom, Skype, Team etc.

If they have not used any online platforms before it is a good idea to send them a user guide on how to use them alongside the joining instructions.

Things you should cover on a remote induction:

* Logistics for home working
* Company history and organisation structure
* The Volunteer role description so it’s really clear from the start what they will be doing. Explain how they fit into the organisation any probation period and monitoring. The remote induction might imply doing more of certain duties whilst they are waiting to be trained in person on other tasks. Make sure they understand (if relevant) that the remote working arrangements are temporary.
* Relevant policies and procedures – where to find them and who can help. It is important that Volunteers understand policies and procedures. Spend time explaining them and give examples rather than assuming the documentation speaks for itself.
* Health and safety procedures for any new and current ways of working
* Equipment / Training that they will need or be issued.
* Introducing them to colleagues will be very helpful if you can get them to join the induction session remotely. Even if only for a small time, it demonstrates to the new Volunteer that they care and that they matter. If this cannot be done at the point of induction it may be a good idea to organise a group video call over lunch one day to introduce them to other colleagues, volunteers and people they may be working with.
* Assign them a work buddy that they can liaise with to show them the ropes if possible.
* Any benefits attached to volunteering with your organisation EG: Tempo Time credits
* Talk them through the Volunteer agreement and allow them the opportunity to ask any questions. It is a good idea to send this to them ahead of the induction so they have a bit of time to pull together any questions they may have about it.

**Key Points**

A successful induction is inspiring, organised and fit for purpose. You can tell how effective it is by how well your volunteer adjusts and acclimates to your organisation. It is vital that you treat your new Volunteer Induction Program as ongoing, and review it regularly by gathering inductee's feedback to ensure it is effective and up to date with the ever changing work landscape presented by Covid.