

Orientation is the process of introducing new employees to an organisation, to an institution, to their specific jobs and departments and colleagues. It marks the beginning of the process by which employees are integrated into the hospital organisation. The process is primarily one of organisation members informing the new employee of the hospital's expectations, this process communicates basic organisational philosophy, policies, rules and procedures.

ORIENTATION

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These programmes can be either formal or informal.

Formal programmes are planned and structured, sections are conducted at a set time. Informal programmes are unstructured in content and are typically conducted by supervisors and co-workers on the employee's first day at work.

Orientation is the official welcome from the hospital, it should be conducted with warmth & understanding. The employee has doubts and fear for the first few days. He needs assurance, confidence and nudge in the right direction until he finds his own ways. In most hospitals some form of orientation follows selection and hiring of new employees. Orientation provides new employees with the basic information regarding working conditions, policies procedures, pay benefits and introduces them to the authorities and its co-workers. Orientation does not include training in the performance of a job, task & responsibilities that come in the training programme. It includes only those points which are needed to introduce a new employee to the hospital and work environment, to guide employees to the

work station and the general policies and procedures that a new environment creates.

The new employees are informed of the acceptable levels of performance. The orientation function typically leads to the training and development function for almost all jobs. Some degree of training follows orientation, while orientation provides new employees with general information, training provides them with the specific knowledge & skills necessary to perform the new job. Orientation is the guided adjustment of a new employee to the hospital, work environment and job. This programme is the result of a plan it is basically meant

for a new employee. Hospitals must continue to orient all its employees as a change. The objectives of orientation are multifold. In carving out such programmes the authorities seek to create a favourable attitude towards the hospital group, its policies, and its personnel. It can instil a feeling of belongingness and acceptance. It can generate enthusiasm and high morale.

Some one should be made responsible to the periodic inventory of what innovations have taken place, and what renewal orientation seems to be necessary and to develop special programmes for this need. These programmes range from brief informal introductions to lengthy formal programmes. Formal and systematic follow up of initial orientation is essential.

Orientation makes the beginning of socialisation the process by which the employee is indoctrinated to the hospital organisations, norms, values and ways of doing things. Orientation helps a new employee to learn what is expected of them in terms of appropriate behaviour and acceptable performance. It gives the new employee confidence and pride in himself and the hospital he works for. It makes him feel part of the team. It contributes to organisational effectiveness by facilitating the socialisation process so

that a new employee becomes integrated into the organisation quickly. The new employee becomes productive worker only when he feels comfortable in the organisation.

A new employee needs lot of job explanation, also first impressions of the new employee affects future job satisfaction, competence, and institutional loyalty. Hospital makes investment of time and money in the new employee and therefore wants to obtain their best efforts on the job, maximum efficiency in the minimum period of time, also their loyalty and respect.

An orientation programme is critical factor in shaping the work attitude. The attitudes formed in the early days on the job tend to persist and are not easily changed. Therefore, an orientation programme must be sound following a carefully thought out plan and adhere to a reasonable (time table).

An orientation rests almost entirely with personnel professionals. They are responsible (over viewing) that orientation programming is initiated in the first place and that it is carried out according to the plan. They determine the programme content and how information will be conveyed and prepare programme materials. They also train line supervisors in the performance of their orientation responsibilities. The information provided in orientation programmes typically covers things like the objectives and philosophy of the hospital, hospital history, hospital policies, hospital practices, hospital services, hospital facilities its' organisation structure, employee responsibilities to hospital and hospital responsibilities to employee, employee compensation benefits, personnel policies, work schedules, training opportunities and safety measures and regulations. Orientation programme needs follow ups. This follow up may be formal or informal like any other personnel function. The programme should be evaluated to determine whether they are accomplishing their stated objectives. It can be evaluated by by soliciting opinions from 

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the employees, or from the employee's supervisor. Personnel records can also be used in evaluating the orientation programme's effectiveness, a good source of evaluation is 'Exit Interviews'.

Supervisor plays the most important role in orientation, he is expected to have a complete understanding of the hospital policies and share his enthusiasm and knowledge with his new recruits. The supervisor is expected to give the new recruits the information he needs when he first reports to work and to answer any questions the employee may have.

An orientation programme helps to establish teamwork and provides motivation towards a good work performance and the supervisor can turn his interest to the immediate and development of the new staff member.

An Orientation programme of a new employee into the hospital is such an important part of the management function that it merits special attention. The programme is intended to help a new employee become integrated as soon as possible functionally and socially in to the hospital, institution and its environment. The main responsibility for implementing supervising and evaluating the programme lies with the concerned line and personnel authority. The content and methods of the programme will vary in details depending upon the position and the new employee's background. A new employee should be met by the responsible line and personnel manager at the beginning and end of the programme. The initial meeting is necessary with a view to build the employee's confidence, explain the aim, objectives and plan of the induction programme. Inform where and how new employee may obtain assistance whenever needed, encourage him to consult his supervisor if any problem arises, ascertain whether there are any initial problems or queries that need to be dealt with. Welcome each new employee individually to the hospital/organisation, and make him comfortable. Build the employee's confidence; con-

vince him of the success on the job; make the employee feel important, explain the cruciality of his job and build a team spirit by explaining hospital history, its objectives and the importance of hospital services. Provide a go round of the entire work area.

Introduce officers and employees during the visit, try to show a friendly atmosphere of the work/departments. Explain the basic duties and responsibilities of the job and show the importance of his job. Explain the hospital policies and procedures. Hospital practices, services and benefits. Introduce him to his immediate supervisor, training department and trainers. Make sure the employee understands whom he has to report during the training period. The training must be described to the employee, build a confidence in the probability of success and show the importance of training. Let the employee know his training period and the conditions of any probationary period. Explain the job performance / standards during the training period and after the training period, make arrangements to ensure the new employee has frequent contact with his immediate supervisor. Make sure the employee knows whom to contact in the event of problems. Show the new employee that he is important to the hospital organisation and its people, make him aware of his career path.

EVALUATION

An evaluation and follow up is must for a systematic orientation programme. A personal representative or an administrator can evaluate the effectiveness of the orientation by follow up interviews with the new employee a few weeks or months after the orientation. A re-orientation programme in which all employees are periodically given a refresher introduction should be a part of the follow up. Re-orientation is especially important if significant changes in policies or structure have occurred. Or, any new department, technique or machine is added in the hospital.

NOTICE

Delegates for the XIX SNA Biennial Conference may please note that they will be received by the organisers of the Conference (as mentioned in the Countdown published in the September issue of Nursing Journal of India) at Bangalore Airport and Bangalore City Railway Station only. It takes 3-4 hours from Bangalore to reach Madanapally. The organisers will arrange for the transport of delegates from Bangalore to Madanapally. Delegates reaching via Chennai must inform the organisers to arrange for a reception committee at Chennai. For Executive Committee meeting, members should reach Bangalore by 14th October for the meeting on 15th October at Horseley Hills, Govt. Guest House.

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