Induction

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Outline

• Introduction & rationale
• Background: research & literature
• The Induction Toolkit
• Learner feedback
• Future developments
Why change induction?
Why change induction?

- Positive impression of institution
- Learner focused
- Reduce anxiety
- Facilitate socialisation
- Inform learners of rights & responsibilities
- Introduce academic & organisational skills
- To support transition to HE

= retention & student success
Perspectives from Identity Studies/Organisational Psychology

• The context
  – Socialisation tactics: Institutionalised V Individualised (Education tends to be more individualised).
  – Provides particular discourses of participation to which entrants are exposed.
  – Must utilise socialisation tactics that will manage and influence the entrant’s perceptions of the compatibility between themselves and the context
• The Individual
  – Pre-entry experiences
    • Existing world view used to interpret new context
    • More experience of type of context is beneficial
  – Pre-emptive identity-work/expectations
    • Expectations not met due to the inflated nature of many organisational recruiting practices or are based on stereotyped or ill-informed knowledge of the new context.
    • More pro-activity with regard to identity-exploration and day-to-day organisation for entry is beneficial
  – Whether or not they are exiting another context/discontinuing the use of another identity
**ENTRY SHOCK!!!**

- New entrants often experience disorientation, a sense of foreignness and a kind of sensory overload when entering a new and possibly unfamiliar context.

- Dissonance may cause the entrant to: leave the new context; renegotiate the terms of their being in that context (or attempt to); or accept the new context, even if it is different to how they thought it would be.
Eliminating or Minimising Entry Shock

• The individual
  – Self-management/Self-regulation during early socialisation will bring less anxiety and stress
  – More sophisticated beliefs about nature of knowledge, and also self-belief, is beneficial
    [the above can be learned from others in the context]
  – Socialising: General, mentoring relationships & with supervisors (create psychologically meaningful groups)
• The context
  – May manage or mismanage the new entrant’s early experience in the context, and their early interactions with others within the context
  – Attempt to ensure that entrant’s conscious pre-entry expectations are not under-fulfilled or unmet
  – Appreciate the near inevitability of entrants having to deal with unanticipated aspects of this new, different context when organisational or group structures and processes are designed
— Encourage learning about local culture and norms in order to facilitate adaptation and progress
  • Use of secrecy norms, the sink-or-swim, learn-on-your-own philosophy, and sanctions against sharing information are dysfunctional for newcomers and for the context
— Provide training in behavioural self-management techniques and reinforce these behaviours through the context’s norms and role models
— Provide timely, formal and informal feedback about their progress (reduces incidence of entrants making inaccurate attributions or unhelpful evaluations about aspects of the context)
• Normalisation

– Entrants who progress beyond initial difficulties, without leaving the context, may then learn the ropes and develop a more stable context specific identity. They have attained a clearer sense of themselves in the new context, their role and what is expected of them. They move from being a newcomer to an insider, within that context.
Identity-creation and identity-management processes in adult learners

- Identity-creation and identity-management processes in adult learners
  - Two interrelated processes: Identity-creation narratives and day-to-day identity-management processes
  - Recommendations: Promote positive identity-creation narratives and facilitate learners in their day-to-day identity-management
Education based research

• Transition from school to HE is a difficult time for students
• The critical points to consider in the transition process are:
  • Adapting to changes in academic teaching and expectations
  • Adapting to changes in social lives, living more independently, a new circle of peers
• Tinto (1987) stated that “students who do not feel that they belong both academically & socially are likely to leave”
The roots of attrition

Why students leave early: (Cuseo 2002)

- Academic under preparedness
- Academic boredom
- Difficulties managing the transition to HE
- Uncertainties about the long term goals
- Perceived irrelevance of the curriculum
- Social isolation
- Mismatch between learner expectations & early experiences
- Low commitment
- Finance
Induction & retention

- First semester is a critical period for students with many students being unprepared for the experience (Yorke, 1999)
- The majority of students are making the transition from the more rigid and formal teaching of second level to HE’s demand for learner autonomy
- Cook and Leckey (1999) demonstrate that ‘A’ level study habits can persist well into the first year
University of Ulster STAR Project

Induction should:

• Familiarise students with campus & services
• Highlight students & staff academic obligations
• Support development of independent study habits
• Provide foundations of social interaction
• Promote good communication between staff & students
Orientation: learner participation

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<td><strong>Total students</strong></td>
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## New Induction: Learner feedback

### I found induction informative

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**Mean:** 4.75

### I got to know other learners during induction

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**Mean:** 4.67
Future developments

• Extend induction & orientation events @ pre-entry, entry & post entry
• Embed induction into first year
• Provide online resources and skills handbook to pre entry learners
• Investigate and measure effect of new induction on retention and success
• Raise awareness about importance of induction
References


