

First Impressions

A survey suggests that one in 25 people has quit a new job after a poor induction. “Recruiters have to prepare clients better”, says Domenic Donatantonio.

First day nerves can be bad enough. But overly brisk inductions – often a cursory tour of the workplace with hurried introductions to staff, coffee machines and toilets – can compound those nerves further and prompt new recruits to turn around walk straight back out the door.

Research from reed.co.uk reveals that one out of every 25 employees has walked out after starting a new job because of poor introduction.

More than 5,700 people gave their experiences to reed.co.uk and there were some real nightmare stories.

One new starter was told to hop on one leg and sing ‘We all live in a yellow submarine’ on their own in front of 20 other new starters.

Another person was left alone in a room with a pile of videos and four hours later someone came to ask if they were ready to start. And one woman started a new job only to find her manager did not know she had been recruited.

Employees in the media and public sectors are less likely to suffer a bad induction, but one in 17 admits to walking out.

Narelle Lester, managing director of Regan & Dean, a media and creative communications consultancy, says the firm has a policy of finding out from clients what is expected of candidates on the first day and how they will be part of the team.

“In our industry, most of the people we work with tend to be ‘people people’, she says, “so they tend to

engage with new recruits a bit more.” But in an ideal world, she says, new recruits would have a user manual on their desk. And even case studies would be helpful.

The reed.co.uk survey also found that 93% of respondents believe that a poor induction has a continual effect on their productivity in the job.

Martin Warnes, head of reed.co.uk, says that while many employers have realised how important it is to attract the right people and invest time and money in recruiting them, all that effort can be wasted if there is no structure in place to help a new starter become fully productive.

“The best inductions are a process not an event”, he says. “They combine ongoing support to bring people right into the culture of their new team.”

Recruiters have a vital role to play here, and not only because they will lose their fee if their candidates walk out. By doing their research and briefing their clients and candidates on company policy and expectations, they are helping to make a new employee feel at home in their new job. That’s more than a quick tour of the loos will ever achieve.