

FIELDTESTING INTEGRATED DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF A COMPULSORY INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

Abstract

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The National School of Government (NSG) seeks to deliver high volume quality education, training, learning and development interventions to all public servants. To achieve this goal, the NSG adopted a pilot approach that seeks to utilise an integrated, participatory, developmental, innovative, reflective, action learning oriented and adaptive approach to the Public Service environment. Amongst the interventions identified for piloting, is the Compulsory Induction Programme (CIP) for new entrants employed at salary levels 13 and 14. Currently, Wamkelekile is the only induction programme targeting senior managers. Its design is not aligned to the CIP Directives of 2012/3 as amended. In order to meet the expectations of the CIP directive, a new conceptual framework was drafted and used to develop new materials for employees appointed at salary levels 13 and 14. As part of the piloting of the conceptual strategy and materials, the NSG, in collaboration with representatives from provinces and a select number of National Departments, used a focus group session to propose a conceptual framework that underpins and guides an integrated design and delivery approach to develop a programme with the potential to reach the targeted public servants. This conceptual framework will be field-tested at the 2015 PSTF (Public Service Trainers Forum) conference. Inputs from this workshop will be used to revise the model as well as the design and delivery systems to rollout the highly integrated induction programme for senior managers.

Key words: integrated, design, delivery, compulsory induction, senior managers, development, curriculum, Public Service

INTRODUCTION

Induction is but the first step towards employment in the Public Service. Induction is understood in Government policies and the above-mentioned programmes as a formal, structured process that orientates and acquaints the new recruits, entrants or newly employed officials (whether into Public Service or new post-levels) with principles, values, norms and belief-sets. Such principles, values, norms and belief-sets cover written and unwritten procedures, laws and codes.

In addition, induction seeks to also integrate new recruits, entrants and employees into the Public Service with the view to enabling them to use their energy and talents to revitalise and contribute towards strengthening the work of the Public Service. Thus induction assumes that well-inducted officials have the potential to transition to the new Public Service environment smoothly. Such well-inducted employees have the potential to readily accept the new Public Service situation and have more realistic expectations of the job than those who have either not been inducted or have been improperly inducted. They are likely to manage stresses that come with the new job in the Public Service. More importantly, well-inducted employees have the potential to contribute meaningfully to the functioning of Government.

It is assumed that good induction programmes lead officials through a structured programme that enable them to become highly productive, fully functional and loyal members of staff. In other words, well inducted officials are imbued with a strong sense of purpose and attachment to the new environment than those who are not inducted.

In her research on guidelines for a better induction programme, Mlindazwe (2010) found a direct relationship between well-inducted officials and job satisfaction, awareness of management practices, and positive ethos, and career prospects. She established that induction happens in three phases: namely, anticipatory socialisation/pre-arrival phase (all learning that take place before joining the induction programme), encounter phase (new employee see what the induction is truly like, role of new member is fully explained, norms are learnt, expectations and reality differ) and, change and acquisition phase (long and lasting change take place, new employee must master the tasks of the job).

INDUCTING SENIOR MANAGERS INTO PUBLIC SERVICE

The ten-year review of Government-wide generic induction reveals that the original intention of compulsory induction courses for SMS (Senior Managers Service) members was to make them accredited (NSG, 2015). More importantly, the courses were intended to be aligned to departmental human resource strategies and programmes.

The introduction of the compulsory induction Directive in 2007/8 excluded the SMS component from a two-day non-accredited Massified Induction Programme [MIP, which was later labelled PSI (Public Service Induction)]. The budget vote speech of indicated that the SMS members in salary levels 13-16 would be inducted separately. Consequently the two-day, non-compulsory *Wamkelekile* programme for senior managers was facilitated separately by two independent individual contractors.

The introduction of the second compulsory induction programme (CIP) Directive in 2012/3 included new entrants employed in salary levels 13-14. The foundation laid by the PSI enabled the CIP for new entrants in salary levels 1-12 to be implemented with immediate effect. The implementation of the CIP in post-levels 13 and 14 has not been implemented as envisaged by the CIP Directive.

The NSG drafted new curricula for new entrants in salary levels 13-14 and aligned them the CIP Directive 2012/3. In July 2015, an update CIP Directive was published with new insights that requires the compulsory induction programme for new entrants in salary levels 13-14 to meet specified expectations and standards. These include, amongst others, accreditation and eligibility of those who complete Module 1 and the Programme for confirmation of probation and pay progression respectively.

The experience of CIP 1-12 and its predecessor reveals a number of lessons for CIP 13-14. The PSI prepared its trainers for a two-day programme through a 8-day Training of Trainers programmes while

the CIP prepared them for a 5-day over three days. The percent of active trainers remained minimal in both the PSI and the CIP. The CIP utilises a cost-recovery model while the PSI largely used an allocated source from treasury and donor funds. Interestingly the tariffs for the MIP/PSI, Wamkelekile and the CIP are comparable.

PILOTING SENIOR MANAGERS' INDUCTION PROGRAMME

On 27 September 2015, the Governance and Administration Cabinet Cluster (G&A) publicly announced that "... the NSG ... has been undertaking benchmark studies and reviewing the delivery model best suited to support the imperatives of the South African developmental state". He further indicated that the NSG would be implementing the following pilot programmes:

1. *Compulsory Induction Programme for newly appointed senior managers at Director and Chief Director levels.*
2. *Performance management and development system for the Public Service.*
3. *Government leadership platform designed to be integrative and focuses on the key priorities of government (aligned to the 14 outcomes) and the leadership obligation of all managers in realising national developmental goals.*
4. *International exchange programme with the Peoples' Republic of China, which involves education and learning at the China Academy of Governance. This follows Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa's official visit to the Peoples' Republic of China in July 2015, which also included a visit to the China Academy of Governance.*

The G&A indicated that "[t]he pilot programmes are intended to test a different and integrated approach to delivery of high volume education and learning opportunities to public servants". The NSG embarked on a consultative process to obtain inputs into a model that would be appropriate for CIP 13-14. The PSTF (Public Sector Trainers Forum) conference planned for 6 October 2015 would be used to elicit the following information from the participants:

- Concept of induction – how would you define induction?
- Knowledge/skills/values areas for SMS levels – how would unpack the induction concept into areas of competence?
- Facilitation methodology – what creative methodology would you use to facilitate learning and development in the identified areas of competence?
- Resourcing – how would you use inter-departmental resources to efficiently and effectively deliver the concept in identified areas of competence?
- Systems – what systems, structures, processes and procedures would you put in place to efficiently and effectively deliver the induction concept in the identified areas of competence?
- Impactful delivery – how would measure impact of the induction concept you defined?

CONCLUSION

Responses to these questions would be analysed and proposals used to recommend the finalisation of the conceptual framework for the CIP 13-14. The plan is to field-test the draft conceptual framework and materials by the end of the 2015/6 financial year. In this way, a piloting approach would have been used to inform a systemic model with capacities and capabilities to roll-out large-scale programmes and interventions.

REFERENCES – a full list to be included after the conference