

## **From Raring to Go to Disorientated; Disillusioned and Disengaged** ***The Price of a Poor First Day Induction***

You're still glowing from hearing you got the job, yes *that* job, the one you've been dreaming of. It's going to be great! You can't wait to get stuck in; make your mark and show them they really made the right choice. Day one and nerves and excitement compete...you arrive early eager to get started, wondering who will greet you and what the day has in store.

Reception rather mechanically directs you to a seat, then picks up the phone, dials, pauses and in a low voice hums of your arrival! You settle on the edge of the cushioned seat, after all no point getting comfortable, someone will no doubt be along shortly to show you to your desk; maybe give you a tour of the office or even offer you a coffee. The minutes tick by. You eye the array of company literature laid carefully in a fan shape on the shiny glass table in front of you, eagerly looking up every time someone sweeps through the rather formidable card swipe security doors beyond reception. More minutes past; you begin to fidget a little and every time you catch the receptionist's eye she smiles somewhat vacantly then carries on furiously tapping at an unseen keyboard behind the high reception desk.

By now 20 minutes have passed and you can't resist a sly glance at your watch, even though you know perfectly well it's been 20 minutes. Some small anxieties begin to twinge. Did the receptionist hear your name correctly? Have you been forgotten? Will this mean that your new boss will think you didn't get here on time?

Another 10 minutes and the formidable doors once again swing into action. A rather out of breath individual makes their way over. You stand instinctively, as they say your name with a question mark; despite you being the only person sitting in reception at that moment.



You nod, feeling you should shake hands, but the courtesy is not forthcoming; instead you're directed to follow which you do at what seems a disconcertingly frenzied pace, through the security doors and into the inner sanctum. No conversation ensues at this point, the 'green mile' is achieved in unnerving silence.

Snaking through a dizzying array of corridors, charting diagonal courses across several open plan offices, you finally arrive, albeit somewhat out of breath; at a desk; your desk! Unfortunately, with frankly an unnecessarily exaggerated sigh of frustration, your companion (whose name you still don't know) informs you that your pc has been ordered but hasn't arrived yet and Facilities haven't yet got around to connecting the desk phone. However, 'someone' will be down later to take you to get your photo done, so you can be issued with a security pass. The kitchen is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, but you'll need to borrow a mug until you can bring in one of your own, but maybe check it's a spare that a previous employee left behind, as people can get upset if you use theirs.

Your guide then grimaces an unconvincing smile of apology explaining that they really do have to get on now; things are just *mad* around here at the moment! Before you can even slip off your coat they've disappeared through a door and you're left standing there alone; dazed and pretty much clueless. What now...?



Most of us agree that first impressions are pretty important and more significantly 'lasting'. The scenario I've just described has on occasion happened to me in one form or another and in conversations I've had with others over the years, apparently I'm not the only one. It seems that this kind of 'first day mishandle' is not as rare as we might think or hope.

Organisations can conduct all the engagement surveys they like, but if you fail to properly execute this early stage of an employee's induction, you've already created an impression about the kind of employer you're going to be; and believe me, not in a good way. Compound that by failing to follow up with a coherent induction and on-boarding strategy and quite quickly your eager new employee will be joining the ranks of the dissatisfied and disillusioned.

Look after your people; people; it's as much in your interest, as it is in theirs.

Author: Lesley Hornsby (founder of [pdtraininguk.co.uk](http://pdtraininguk.co.uk)) April 2017