

Outline for a Board Induction pack

These are suggestions for what to put in your Board Induction pack.

Welcome

Write:

- about how new Board members have been chosen
- that you are glad they have joined
- that you hope they will be happy

About the Induction pack

Make a list of what is in the Induction pack.

Before your first Board meeting

Write:

- that they can talk to the Chair if they have any questions
- what you expect them to do to prepare (eg read this pack, fill in a Board Member Interests Form)
- about travel arrangements (eg who books train travel and accommodation; what travel expenses can be claimed back)

About your organisation

Say what your organisation's legal status is.

- Add a link **or** put a copy in the pack of the Companies House information for Directors if you are a company, or of Charity Commission information for Trustees if you are a company.
- Add a link **or** put a copy in the pack for your organisation's Constitution, rules or Memorandum & Articles of Association.

Add a copy of MIRROR.

Explain how the Board will use MIRROR principles in all their decisions.

Write something about your organisation's:

- values
- history
- links with other organisations
- style of working

Add three charts to show:

- the people who do the work (staff, volunteers)
- the people who make decisions (Board, members committees)
- how the members, Board and staff work together

If you have one, add your Mission Statement.

Add a link to your Business plan, or put a copy in the pack.

Policies and procedures

Include a tick list of policies and procedures that the person must read and follow. Explain they must put their initials and the date when they have read each policy. Tell them who to ask if they aren't sure what a policy means, or cannot work out how to follow it.

Links to other handbooks

Board members need to know the rules for staff, because the Board is the employer.

Board members need to know the rules for members, because the Board is running the organisation for the members.

How the organisation expects Board members to behave

Include information about the Nolan Principles for Public Life.

- Think about what is best for others, not yourself
(Selflessness)
- Do not let other people bribe you or influence you
(Integrity)
- Be fair, and make decisions based on facts
(Objectivity)
- Remember you answer to the members
(Accountability)
- Don't keep secrets unless you can explain to members why you need to keep something secret
(Openness)
- Tell the truth
(Honesty)
- Be willing to speak up if other Board members break any of these rules
(Leadership)

Include anything about important to your organisation about:

- dress code
- language
- how to treat other people
- social media

Accessibility

Explain what 'accessibility' means for your organisation.

Include:

- rules about using Easy Read
- rules for booking venues
- rules for running meetings

Making decisions and doing the work

Your constitution or rules will say how the Board makes decisions.

You may add rules, for example about Sub-Committees.

You may want a Sub-Committee for things like:

- dealing with money or grant applications
- planning a campaign or a project
- thinking about the future of the organisation
- dealing with employing staff

Here is a suggestion for something to add if you want to have sub-committees.

Sub-committees are a way of getting work done. Anyone can be on the Sub-Committee, even if they are not a member of the organisation.

A Sub-Committee:

- can be set up by the Board
- will be chaired by someone from the Board
- has no power to make decisions
- does a lot of work
- reports back to the Board so the Board can make a decision.

The Board must agree and write down:

- what piece of work the Sub-Committee is going to do
- who is on the Sub-Committee
- how they will report to the Board
- when the Sub-Committee will finish its work

The Board's role

It is good to include some basic information like this:

The Board runs the organisation on behalf of the members. This means:

- the members are in charge.
- the Board must listen to the members.
- the Board must use the MIRROR principles

The Board runs the organisation according to the law. This means:

- the Board makes sure it obeys Employment Law
- the Board makes sure it follows Health and Safety Laws
- if it is a company, the Board makes sure the organisation obeys Company Law
- if it is a charity, the Board makes sure the organisation obeys Charity Law

How the Board does its work

Write something about:

- routine Board meetings (how often, where, when the paperwork will be sent out)
- communication between Board meetings (how and why)
- extra roles. This might include going to meetings with staff (eg to meet a funder, or to meet the Members Committee)
- media work (who is allowed to speak to media, how press releases will be written, what to do if there is a sudden news story involving your organisation)
- Board health check (The MIRROR Pack includes a Board health check form)
- Board skills check (The MIRROR Pack includes a Board skills check form)

Example of a Board member agreement

Board agreement between

_____ and

1. You became a Board member on

_____.

You will be a Board member for 1 year. You can be elected again. After 3 years you must stop being a Board member for at least 1 year.

2. If you want to stop being a Board member, you must write to the Chair. Please tell us if you want to stop because of a problem with the organisation or the Board.

3. You must always send your apologies if you cannot come to a meeting. If you do not come to 3 meetings in a row, and you do not

send your apologies, you will stop being a Board member.

4. As a Board member you have a right to

- equal status with the other Board members
- training to help you be a Board member

5. As a Board member you have the responsibility to

- come to meetings
- send apologies if you cannot come
- understand what we aim to do, and agree with our values
- speak up if anyone treats someone unfairly
- be willing to do board work between meetings
- do what you say you will between board meetings
- support board decisions, even if you do not agree with the decision
- keep confidential everything said at board

meeting

- keep the minutes confidential. If you need help from your supporter, make sure your supporter keeps everything confidential.

6. We have an Induction programme. This means we will help you learn what you need to know to be a Board member.

7. We will give you the chance to meet the other Board members and paid workers.

8. We will give you an Induction pack with our Annual Report, Policies, Plans and Minutes from the last Committee meeting.

9. You must tell us if there is any reason why what is best for you is not always what is best for the group. This is called a conflict of interest.

We have a form you can fill in if you think you

may have a conflict of interest. If you are not sure, you must ask the Chair.

10. You and the other Board members have special responsibilities. These are to:
 - take legal responsibility for any workers
 - be the employer for paid workers
 - remember our values and listen to the Members' Committee when the Board make plans
 - check that we are meeting our aims
 - look into the future and make plans for us
 - try to make sure there is enough money to keep running
11. If you give some of your power to staff or volunteers, check they are doing what you asked them to do
12. You must not talk about board meetings to other people.
13. You must not talk to the media unless the Chair asks you to.
14. You must not say things that give the group a bad reputation.
15. You will follow the rules about how the group is run.

16. You will stand by decisions the committee make, even if you disagree.

Board member Declaration

I understand this contract. If I needed help, I asked a supporter to explain it to me.

I understand what I must do as a Board member.

I will take time to find out about our policies and plans.

I will fill in a Personal Interests Form if I think I need to. If I am not sure, I will ask the Chair. If I have a serious conflict of interest, I will resign from the committee.

I will keep everything confidential. If I have a supporter, I may talk to my supporter. I will tell my supporter to keep everything I say confidential.

I will not talk to the press unless the Chair asks me to.

Signed

Date