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Induction plan for Gigantti Kaari

Creating a comprehensive induction process

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Abstract

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Induction has an extensive impact on a company's functionality; it affects both employee and customer satisfaction. Induction is the process where the recruit learns what their work tasks include, how to perform the job and the essential information about the company they work for.

The thesis was conducted for the store of Gigantti Kaari to develop and make the induction programme more comprehensive. This work aims to answer the research question of how to create the most comprehensive induction programme. The research was constructed of a literature review that addresses 1) why induction is essential for companies and research that addresses 2) how to create an effective step-by-step induction plan, and 3) what changes are necessary to build it.

The research methods used in this study were quantitative research as a survey and qualitative research as semi-structured in-depth interviews for the store employees. The objective was to gather information on the satisfaction of the past induction processes and what changes and improvements are necessary to implement.

The work tasks in Gigantti Kaari consist of various phases and routines, and it's crucial to train the employees successfully, besides the company history and values, the recruits should have a high-quality theory and practical training for the actual tasks with the proper time reserved for it. The theory should consist of what the tasks include, cause-and-effect relations related to them, and the practical side built supporting the theory with detailed and comprehensive training.

The researcher suggests development discussions with recruits after the induction programme to reveal points of improvement and, therefore, the possibility of creating a more comprehensive and successful induction programme.

Keywords: induction, induction plan, human resources, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, management

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1 Introduction

This thesis aims to identify and review the current quality of the induction in Gigantti Oy and create an induction plan for one specific store: Gigantti Kaari. Gigantti Oy Ab is a consumer electronics retailer in Finland. The business focuses on sales and repairs of home appliances, informative technology, and accessories for the mentioned product groups. Gigantti Oy Ab was founded in 1999 and now has more than 1500 employees in 42 stores, a distribution centre, a Customer Contact Centre (CCC), B2B centres, and a 'back office' in Finland.

As the induction in different stores is quite inconsistent, one plan cannot be implemented in a specific store, which is Gigantti Kaari. The store Gigantti Kaari is relatively tiny compared to other stores of this company; it consists of only 42 employees. Most of the employees are part-time employees who are full-time students. In comparison, the megastore Tammisto consists of 115 employees. This creates a shortage of employees in Kaari before the newcomers are appropriately inducted. The issue with the induction of incoming employees is the time on hand; as old employees leave, there is only a small-time frame to hire new ones, which usually ends in a shortage of employees in departments.

The inspiration for the thesis topic started in May 2021, when approximately 35 new employees began with a month-long induction and training. When the new employees had their first days in Gigantti Oy, the management of Gigantti Kaari wanted to organise induction days' so that new employees were aware of the store's brand-new vision and values. The induction of newcomers consisted of training and theory, e.g., history and corporate culture of the company given by department managers and the key people working at 'the back office.'

The objective is to determine the right way to implement this broad induction period in May for a shorter time frame. This is because most new employees have short and varied training for the job, depending on the staffing and time on

hand. The purpose of this is that equal training would be available for all. The advantage of the research topic is the researcher's own experience working in two department stores of this company.

1.1 Company introduction

A new store was opened in Kannelmäki, Helsinki, in June 2021, with about 40 new employees. Gigantti Kaari differs from other stores by training the staff on an idea and implementation of "everybody does everything." This means that the store has two central departments, Operations and Sales. These departments are divided into sub-departments which have a person responsible for the department as follows:

Sales

- Major Domestic Appliances (MDA) includes washing machines, dryers, fridge, freezers, etc., and accessories for these. Small Domestic Appliances (SDA) include coffee makers, vacuums, toasters, and accessories.
- Consumer Electronics (CE) includes televisions, speakers, headphones, accessories, etc.
- Information technology (Tech) includes laptops, desktops, gaming, printers, accessories, etc.
- Telecommunication (Tele) includes phones, tablets, smartwatches, accessories, etc.
- Kitchen & Interiors includes Epoq kitchen designing and kitchen products.

Operations (also referred to as Aftersales)

- Cashiers include handing money, financing agreements, etc.
- Support includes handling IT problems, Ready-To-Go (RTG), and Support Agreement (SA) installations for customers.

- The warehouse includes repairs, warranty issues, and incoming and outgoing goods handling.
- Merchandising (which in this store is the responsibility of everyone) includes item planograms, internet order picking (Collect@Store), shelving, and pricing.

As mentioned above, the store has an idea of everyone doing everything, but it is limited to the central departments; salespeople sell all the sub-department goods, and operations workers are not limited to one sub-department but can help customers with any kind of issues. As a sub-department of Operations, merchandising still belongs as a responsibility of all, not limited to Operations itself. The aim is to train all employees equally in all the areas of expertise, but naturally, it takes longer than only one area of expertise. For example, the average training time for extensive knowledge for a warehouse worker takes about two years; combining this with training for cashier and support, the time is unconfirmed.

1.1.1 The current level of induction

As mentioned in the first chapter, the induction in Gigantti is variable; all the stores use their own process. However, there is some congruence, such as the online portal Academy, where employees must pass special training, for example, GDPR training, loyalty club membership training, etc. The academy portal is part of the orientation for the job, mandatory exercises before the on-the-job training starts. Many stores use induction checklists, where the inductor marks when they have gone through specific aspects of the newcomer's job. In addition, there is also a follow-up Excel sheet, where managers can keep what competencies each employee has. Many new employees in Gigantti have completed the online training and then moved to the on-the-job training without going through the company's fundamentals, history, or the actual parts of the job they are meant to perform.

The 40 employees of Gigantti Kaari and those who came after that have had actual orientation days and theoretical and practical training for the job. The

Store Manager welcomes the recruits in separate locations, shows them videos of other employees, and goes through the history of the company and the values, vision and mission of the store.

Newcomers have one to two days with the Store Manager, who introduces them to the overall history, the purpose of Gigantti Oy, and the company's goals. They are taught more specifically about the store Gigantti Kaari. The store's mission is *"From us to you and from you to us,"* the vision is to be *"World's best Gigantti"*. The store values are the following: *positivity, nascent, openness, and together we succeed*. These are the values the managers of the store concentrate on while recruiting people. If a person does not fit within these values, they probably will not be hired even if they are enthusiastic and have experience. The store also does a lot to show its commitment to these values in everyday work. In their first days at the workplace, newcomers will be doing the Academy training while meeting their new co-workers.

Operations

After completing the online theory training, new Operations employees will start practical training on their work tasks, led by the person responsible for the department. They usually work with the person responsible for the subdepartment for the first few days, helping them and teaching them about the job. The newcomer learns cashier, support, and warehouse in the Operations department in the same week; it might be one or two days of each section for a couple of weeks. Cashier training primarily teaches how to handle cash, take payments, do product returns, manage online reservations called 'Collects' when customers pick them up, settle money in the evenings, and open tills in the morning. Support training primarily includes learning how to help customers with their product problems, teaching them to handle the product, transferring data from old devices to new ones, and installing needed software and updates. Warehouse training includes receiving incoming goods, supervising repairs, sending them to workshops, and following these routines; they also handle the outgoing post and packages.

Sales

In the Sales department, a person first learns to use the company's software. There are different service training each day, such as insurance, support agreements, financing agreements, internet and telephone subscriptions, and the services' rules. Sales employees also undergo a series of product training from their Department Managers and trainers from several manufacturers teaching about device-specific differences. Newcomers sometimes follow the work of the person responsible and listen to their selling speeches, but in the end, the newcomers find their own way to sell products and services. The process is long, multi-stage, and depth. Becoming independent at their work is very individualist, but the rough estimate is about two months for the person to be able to sell alone without constant support.

In both departments, newcomers learn while doing the job in the end; they are taught various things but eventually, the person learns by asking and doing the job for the time being. There are always variables as to why induction is left short, for example, a shortage of employees; if there are not enough resources, induction cannot be carried out better.

1.1.2 Future implementation

In May 2022, a new induction process is being implemented in Finland called All On Board. It is a new portal with its own website, and it is more relevant, includes better support content, and is easier to modify and fix. The new portal enables targeting; the current induction process is a general one, but, in the future, it is possible to target specific areas in one department, for instance, Operations and Sales or Data and Tele departments. The new induction portal is meant to intensify, standardise and ease the process for the units and their managers.

A newcomer can access the website two weeks before starting in the company. The site includes a link to the Academy training portal where, for now, there is overall training for all, but then the starter has specific training rather one is going to the Sales or Operations department. The training also comes in small

phases, with time estimates for the execution. The website also includes the list of tasks, the company's vision and values, a greeting video of the CEO, an explanation of different work tasks, and various videos of the company and its employees. One can message their manager or co-worker, see their team, display an organisational chart of employees and see their employee profile.

The portal enables the employer to keep track of what to do next, whether one has keys, a name tag or has done the necessary online training by the deadline, or the manager can assign new tasks to an employee or themselves. There is also a recommendation for three follow-up meetings and a development discussion. This is a way to follow and support the new hires and nominate a support person for the newcomer; then, one sees their name and contact information on their page.

2 Literature Review

Comprehensive research is needed to create a working plan for induction in the store. In the literature review section of the thesis, the theory and different models of induction will be presented. In addition, the section will introduce the Finnish Employment Contracts Act and the Occupational Safety and Health Act. In order to understand and create a suitable induction model for the company, one needs to understand the laws mentioned above. Valvira and Finlex provide relevant information in the field of this topic. According to Finlex, 2002: "Employers shall give their employees necessary information on the hazards and risk factors of the workplace and ensure, taking the employees' occupational skills and work experience into consideration..." (Occupational Safety and Health Act 738/2002, 14§).

Employers also have a general obligation towards the employees: "The employer shall in all respects work to improve employer/employee relations and relations among the employees. The employer shall ensure that employees are able to carry out their work even when the enterprise's operations, the work to be carried out, or the work methods are changed or developed. The employer shall strive to further the employees' opportunities to develop themselves

according to their abilities to advance in their careers.” (Employment Contracts Act, 55/2001, Chapter 2, Section 1)

2.1 Definition of induction

Several studies on the subject can be used to outline the theory of induction. For example, Hendricks and Louw-Potgieter (2012:1) explain clearly the meaning of induction: “Induction (or on-boarding, as it is known in the United States of America [USA]), refers to the process of combining the people, processes, and technology needed to optimise the effect that a new hire has on business outcomes”.

A good induction is always needed, whether it is about an employee moving to new work tasks, a recruit, a rental employee, or an outside company representative. Induction means all those actions which create a premise to perform the new job quickly and efficiently and prosper. The primary responsibility for the induction is the manager.

Induction gives many advantages, depending on how efficiently a new employee handles one’s work tasks and the quality of the jobs. Induction affects the experience of the provided support in the new work environment. This also reflects how one sees their role in the work community and company and how one thinks of the company as an employer (Viitala, 2021:82-84).

Induction is the management of the early stages of a relationship between an organisation and a new employee. It is considered one of the primitive and vital tools of corporate governance. If it was not given much importance in the past, at present, it requires forward-thinking organisations. A well-designed onboarding process is related to good work performance due to higher job satisfaction. Effective onboarding represents an organisation’s critical success, so to ensure organisational growth, talent management must address two main issues: finding qualified candidates and employee retention (Badshah & Bulut 2020:319).

2.2 Benefits of induction

There have been thriving industries and individuals working in them throughout history without today's induction programmes. Therefore, it is essential to examine why induction is crucial in today's marketplace. Businesses don't have the possibility to waste time, money, or talent. Companies are looking to grow, and skill is required to achieve that. Being seen as an attractive workplace ensures that employees have a positive experience from day one.

It is important to remember that the induction process provides a smooth entry for the newcomer to the team and the team manager overseeing the process. This enables a less stressful start for the employee and creates less disruption to the company and its customers. An effective way is to have all the paperwork filled, access codes and badges ready, and critical questions answered. This enables the newcomer to start training for the specific job role and orientation and hastens the process of the new hire becoming a more contributory member of the team (Lombardi, 2011: 11).

Nowadays, employees are viewed as the essential resource for companies and, most of all, well-inducted ones. According to Mchete and Shayo (2020:285):

"Knowledgeable, integrated and well-performing employees are fundamental assets for the success of any organisation. Of particular interest is the need to make new employees gain the required knowledge to achieve the status of valuable assets for the organisation. This makes investment in new employee induction training an inevitable activity that requires proper planning and execution."

Induction plays an integral part in helping newcomers to adjust emotionally to the new workplace. It provides a forum that includes the basic information about the organisation; this may consist of materials on the company's purpose and key issues. The induction process is also an excellent way to bring awareness of the company culture and what the employee and employer can expect from each other; this potentially forms a psychological contract between the two parties. This way, the newcomer is aware of what is likely to advance in the organisation; these come up during the first months of employment either way but doing it in the early stage and including these in an induction program

ensures bringing them up to speed quicker and possibly prevents the recruit from leaving at an earlier date (Torrington 2020:298-299).

2.3 Induction and motivation

Motivation is needed in working life as much as in free time. One cannot perform highly at work if one has no urge to do so. People have a natural habit of searching for meaning in everything they do; if one does not feel a task is meaningful, they won't get motivational. According to research, people think their work is significant if it matches their skill and is challenging enough; has reachable and acceptable targets; the position provides justified and tempting rewards, and the working environment enables them to succeed at tasks.

Motivation is tricky for employers because it cannot be affected directly since it is individual and endogenous (Viitala, 2021:35–36).

Viitala (2021:82-84) clarifies the effects of induction on recruits mentally and how it affects motivation. Induction also influences mental well-being at work in many ways. The better one can perform on tasks, the more significant are experiences of succeeding and trust in their development. Good outcomes follow the positive feedback and the other employees' positive attitude towards the recruit. These strengthen one's self-confidence and enthusiasm to develop and help build good interactions within the work community. Induction also influences physical well-being from increased work safety and decreasing mental strain. The less one must be nervous in their first work weeks or months, and the less one is strained physically and mentally.

According to Badshah & Bulut (2020:320), one purpose of the induction programme is to increase retention. In this sense, companies seek to create a bond between new hires and the employees within the organisation. The way new employees are integrated into the organisation may affect their short/long term success, according to Bethany B. and Joseph T.D. (2019), cited in Badshah & Bulut (2020:321), "only 32% of companies provide a formal onboarding experience for new employees. Researchers identified that successful onboarding should take four major levers into consideration."

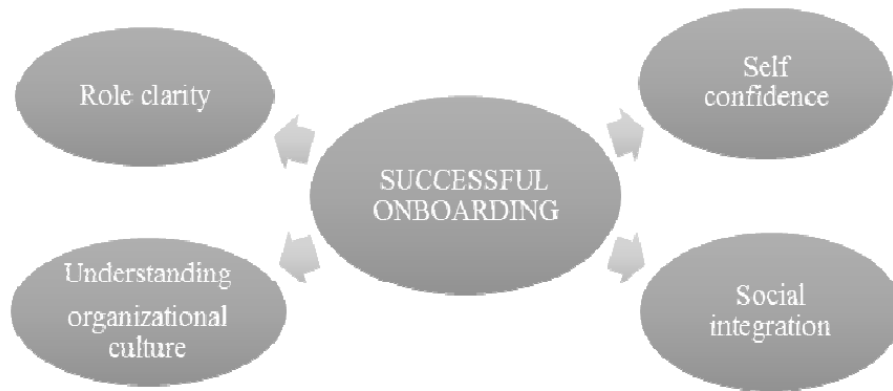


Figure 1 The four levers of induction success (Badshah, W & Bulut, M. 2020:321).

Self-confidence – Targeting specific programmes in induction might help the employee increase their confidence Bauer et al. (2007) cited in (Badshah & Bulut, 2020:321).

Role clarity – According to Organizational Diagnostic & Development (ODD), role clarity enables performance management and ensures that all team members contribute fully in terms of their capabilities (Badshah & Bulut 2020:321).

Social integration – A good relationship with one’s manager and co-workers are related to job satisfaction and performance. An effective working relationship makes the employee feel more comfortable (Badshah & Bulut, 2020:321).

Understanding organisational culture – Satisfaction, commitment, and low turnover are associated with understanding the goals and values (Bauer T.N., 2010) cited in (Badshah & Bulut, 2020:321).

The increase in retention can be linked to the term ‘employee engagement’. Motivation, satisfaction, and commitment are all affiliates to employee engagement, which Kahn (1990) can be credited for, conceived of its being made up of two distinct elements: emotional engagement and cognitive engagement. **Emotional engagement** is when employees have emotional ties

to their managers and feel that they are interested in their development and opinions. On the other hand, **cognitive engagement** is employees knowing what is expected from them. They understand their mission and purpose in the company, and they are allowed to grow. They are also provided information on how to improve their progress (Torrington, 2020:288).

Companies that don't support a comprehensive introduction phase for new employees not only risk losing productivity generated by the employee but also losing their interest in the company. All new employees go through a learning curve despite their role in the company; during this time, one performs below the level of a productive employee. The learning curve represents the time required for the new hire to achieve total productivity and the rate at which one progresses towards full productivity throughout the ramp-up period (Snell, 2006:32).

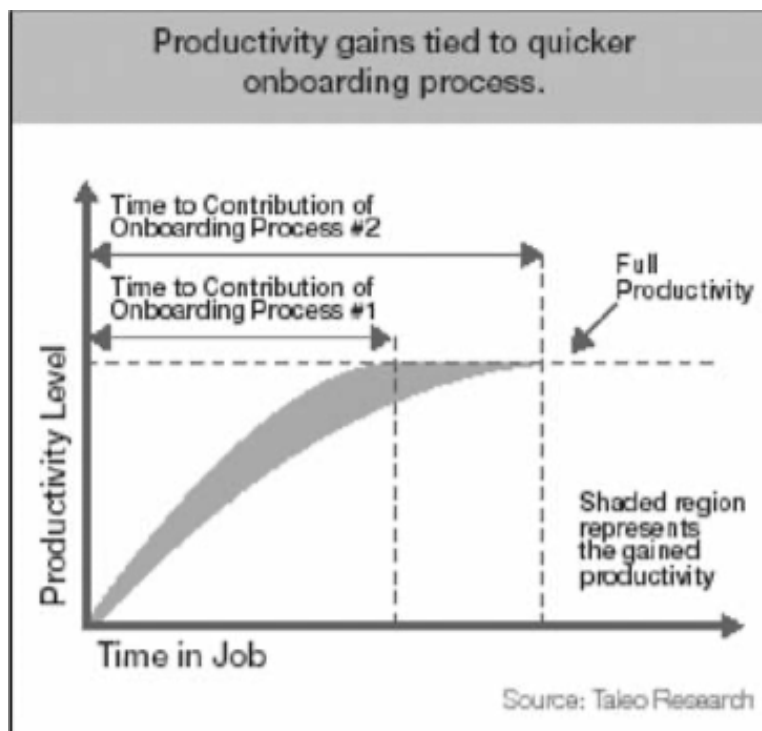


Figure 2 The typical learning curve for a new employee (Snell, 2006:33).

An effective induction process enables new team members to access information, tools, and materials needed to perform their functions more quickly. Productivity generated by the successful induction of a new hire sooner will

have a direct, positive effect on the company's overall productivity (Snell, 2006:32).

2.4 Steps of the induction process

2.4.1 Before starting the job

Induction starts in the recruitment phase and the selection decision. Applicants are given information on the job already in the interviews. When the selection is informed, it also creates the discussion of the employment and details. Selected recruit receives materials about the company and work-related information. Many companies have a 'welcome to the job -info package,' and often, the recruit discusses with the employer before starting the job. The better the employee can prepare in advance, the better the induction phase (Riitta Viitala, 2021:82-84). In establishing a psychological contract, recruitment advertising is used; this means the employer and employee's expectations of each other. This is a way for a possible employee to experience what working in the company would be like. It is essential to create a positive impression with potential recruits since the recruitment process is a two-way street, with candidates making decisions about prospective employers and vice versa. This two-way recruitment process enables a higher possibility of a good fit hire and increases organisational effectiveness. (Torrington, 2020:169-170)

2.4.2 Reception

Orientation on the first day provides new employees with the information they need to function. Roughly, the first-day reception aims to help the new employees start becoming emotionally attached to the company. It lets one feel welcome, gives them basic information, allows them to understand the organisation itself, and helps them become socialised (Dessler 2013:270). New employee reception is an experience that has a substantial psychological impact on the recruit. If one feels welcome by the company, manager, and work community, this creates a reasonable basis for the induction and the whole employment relationship.

A manager has an important role when he helps the recruit get into the company and experiences that one has an impact on the business with their job. The manager clarifies the company's features, business idea and strategy, future sights, market environment, and clients and competitors. The manager also introduces the recruit to the work community. The induction program is gone through with the contents and schedules. The reception should let the recruit know where one has come to, feels necessary, and outlines the induction program (Viitala, 2021:82-84).

2.4.3 Employment induction

Within the first days of the induction, the principles of the job are looked through, which both parties are committed to complying with. An essential part of that is checking the employment contract and signing it. During this, working hours and schedules are clarified, as are absence regulations and other rules of the working place. Remuneration, payday, and payroll routines are described, including security issues and purchase of work equipment regulations. In addition to the mentioned issues, work well-being should be discussed; this contains occupational health services and health-supporting activities and benefits, dining and break facilities, and other social facilities (Viitala, 2021:82-84).

2.4.4 Job guidance

This is training for the actual work and workplace; in this area, induction is taken care of so that the employee is reliable enough to start the new job. The newcomer is introduced to the physical work environment, closest co-workers, and support provided at work. The main points of this phase are the content of work, work phases, principles of working, and the quality of results. Essential matters include the location and usage of needed machines, equipment, and materials (Viitala, 2021:82-84). This could be partly referred to as On-the-job training (OJT), which means learning the job by doing it. Every employee, despite the title, had received on-the-job training when they joined the firm. As the OJT is the only training available in many firms, this should be integrated into the extensive induction process rather than only using it alone (Dessler

2013:279). The guidance has been successful when one knows what is expected and boundaries for deciding about work-related issues. One has the confidence of knowing where to seek support. The manager and possibly a co-worker follow the development. The induction is finished when the newcomer feels no need for one anymore. The competence development is continuous, but it becomes a regular part of managing performance (Viitala, 2021:82-84).

2.5 A theoretical and practical approach

Good induction includes both theoretical content and practical application. For this reason, one of the theories chosen for the work is the TPI theory of induction. According to Ndebele (2013:103):

“Induction training should, according to TPI-Theory, include development of theoretical and practical skills. In addition to these skills requirements, according to TPI-Theory, induction should also meet other needs of the workers, specifically interaction needs that exist among the new employees through the necessary socialisation processes leading ultimately to employee integration. The ‘T’ in TPI-Theory represents Theoretical knowledge, while the ‘P’ Practical knowledge and the ‘I’ represent the Interaction and integration needs of employees”.

In addition to the theory found in literature, an example of the importance of using qualitative and quantitative research data, as planned in this thesis in the form of in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys for employees, is the research made by Snell (2006:33-34):

“A 2005 Taleo research survey of onboarding practices of large corporations found most respondents reported an inconsistent and unsatisfactory approach to onboarding in their organisations:

More than one-third are without a formal process to monitor and coordinate the completion of onboarding activities.

The majority of survey respondents report a lack of consistency across their organisation for onboarding.

Variable onboarding practices also apply to the starting point for the onboarding process.

Less than half of the respondents are satisfied with the onboarding process at their company.”

3 Methodology

3.1 Research methods

A good research study helps one understand products, customers, and processes and develop policies, strategies, and tactics. Once the research question is defined and the problem identified, the research design phase can start. A research design can include exploratory, descriptive, or causal approaches (Sreejesh, Mohapatra, Anusree, 2014:82). Sreejesh et al., 2014 define the causal study as

“...a basic aim to identify cause and effect relationships between variables. For instance, studying the effect of price, advertising, and marketing on sales comprise causal studies. Therefore, researchers need to have a thorough knowledge of the subject area of research.”

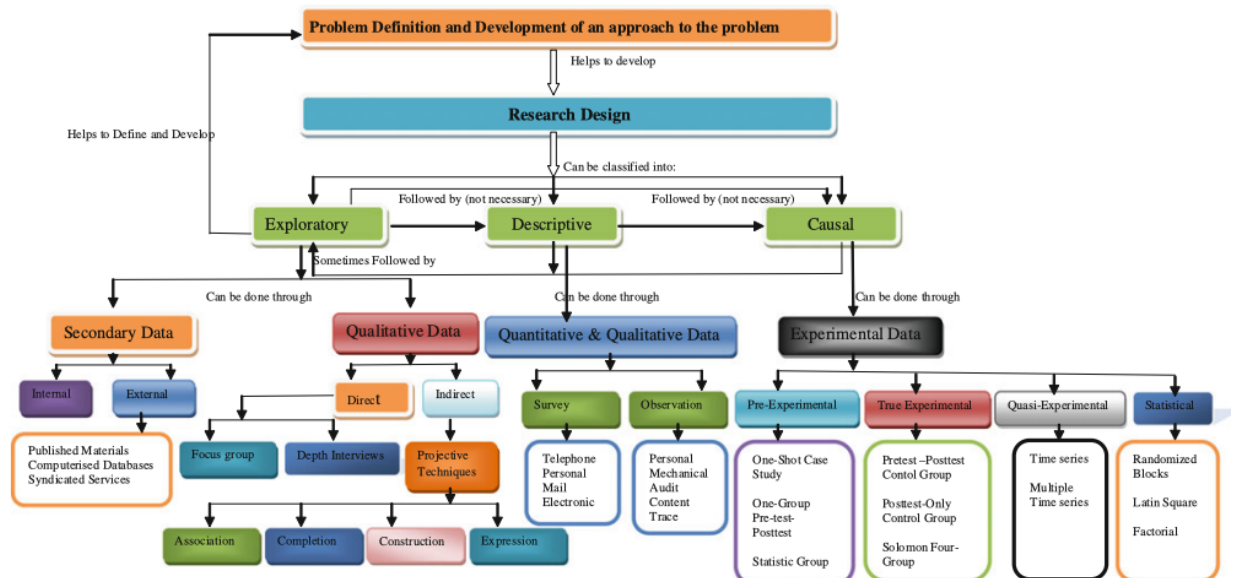


Figure 3 Research design overview (Sreejesh et al., 2014:29)

The exploratory design helps to assess and understand critical issues; it is not used in cases where definite results are desired. This form of research is used for three main reasons: to evaluate alternatives, analyse a problem situation, and discover new ideas. The exploratory study consists of secondary data and qualitative data collection. Secondary data is a form of data based on research papers, university or company publications, literature, the internet, etc. It may provide alternative methods for primary research, as every research situation has custom-made primary research. Sometimes the secondary data holds a solution since similar research might have been conducted before. Descriptive research design includes surveys and observation. It is a method of collecting information by asking pre-formulated questions in a structured questionnaire from individuals. The researcher must go through sampling, questionnaire design, questionnaire administration, and data analysis in conducting a survey. Surveys are administered to an individual or a group of individuals either face-to-face, over the phone, or in any other communication media, decided in advance (Sreejesh et al., 2014:31-39).

3.2 Qualitative Research

On the other hand, qualitative research is used as a primary research method. It can be sub-divided into three different types of research, depth interviews, focus groups, and projective techniques, as represented in Figure 3. The latter is classified as an indirect approach, while the first two are direct approaches (Sreejesh, S. et al., 2014:46-47). All the sub-divided research types have subcategories, but the following chapters are concentrated on the first one, depth interviews.

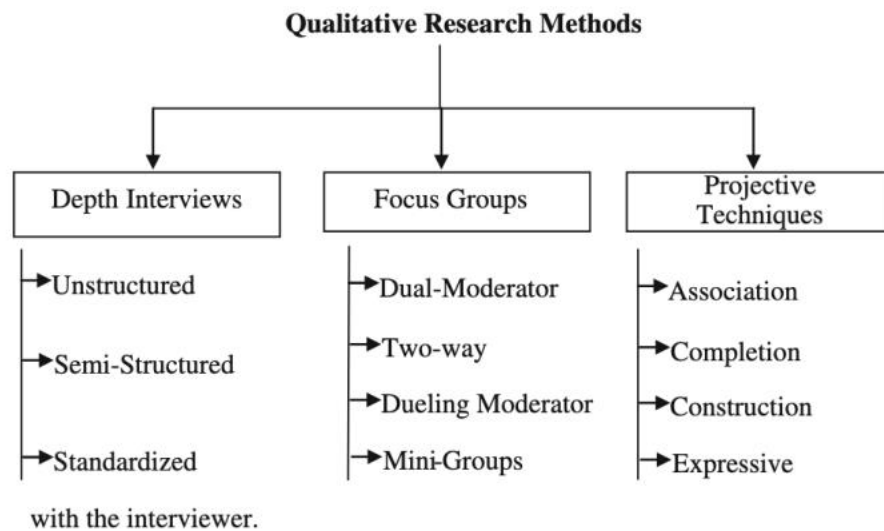


Figure 4 Classification of qualitative research methods (Sreejesh et al., 2014:47)

Depth interviews are “a qualitative approach in which moderator interviews with individuals, rather than with groups, to obtain information about a product or brand.” The interviews are usually conducted on a one-to-one basis. This enables the interviewer and interviewee to interact and explore an issue. Depth interviews can be divided into three categories, unstructured, semi-structured, and standardised open-ended interviews. An unstructured interview is a natural conversation where the interviewer brings up topics of interest to him, and the respondent has the freedom to decide which direction the interview takes. Semi-structured interviews are more structured than the latter but allow some amount of flexibility. This method ensures that the interview is limited to the topics essential to the research. The indirect approach known as standardised open-ended interviews contains carefully worded, ordered open-ended questions. This reduces the difference in responses with different individuals. This is appropriate when there are two or more interviewers. This enables the researcher to collect systematically but limits the individual differences (Sreejesh et al., 2014:47-49).

3.3 Quantitative Research

Descriptive research design is constructed from surveys and observation. Observation is a method that does not include any communication with the

respondents, and the sole purpose is to observe people's behavioural patterns without affecting them. Some of the most popular observation methods are *Direct Observation*, *Contrived Observation*, and *Participant Observation*. *Direct Observation* is a method where the researcher tries to gain an insight into a shopper's behaviour, for instance, without being noticed by the person; this includes structured (the researcher remains passive) and unstructured (the researcher can use a disguise). *Contrived Observation* is a method where the subject is unaware of being scrutinised for a specific behaviour; this is known as natural observation. *Participant Observation* is a process where the researcher builds relationships with individuals and groups in their natural setting. This requires the observatory to be involved in the daily activities, for example, an employee observing co-workers (Sreejesh et al., 2014:78-80).

A survey is a method of collecting information by asking pre-formulated questions in a structured questionnaire from individuals. The researcher must go through sampling, questionnaire design, questionnaire administration, and data analysis in conducting a survey. Surveys are administered to an individual or a group of individuals either face-to-face, over the phone, or in any other communication media, decided in advance. A typical objective is to study changes in behavioural patterns of subjects of interest to the researcher and describe or learn from the ongoing activity. Surveys tend to be descriptive in nature, but they also entail some qualitative aspects, such as satisfaction surveys (Sreejesh et al., 2014:58).

A survey is a research technique used to gather information from a sample of respondents by employing a questionnaire. Surveys are usually used to obtain primary data. There are four ways to collect data from respondents, in other words 'mode of communication': telephone, meeting the respondents in person, sending an email survey, or electronic, see figure 5 (Sreejesh et al., 2014:17). In this study, as a mode of communication, an electronic survey, a link, was sent via a workplace communication tool with an explanation of what the data was collected for.

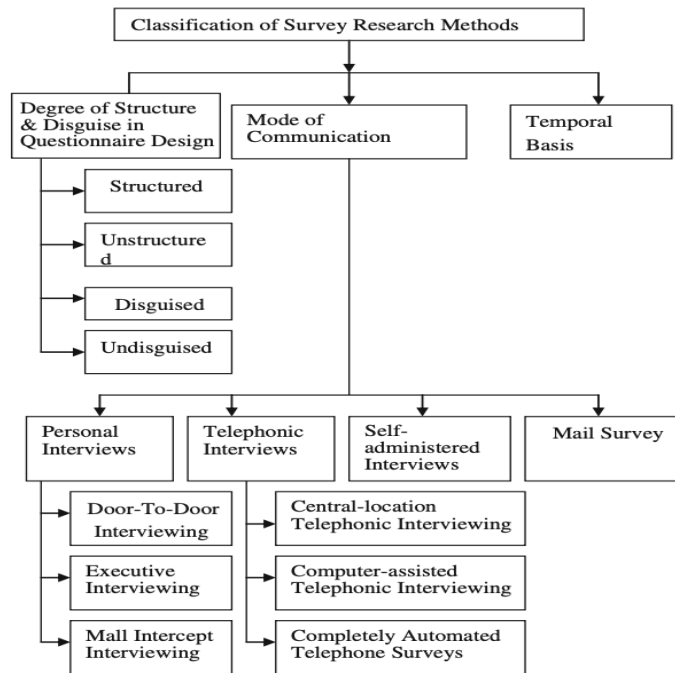


Figure 5 Classification of survey research methods (Sreejesh et al., 2014:59)

Design for the questionnaire is a vital issue; a properly designed survey can help gather the necessary information from respondents. Questionnaires have four categories, *structured*, *unstructured*, *disguised*, and *undisguised*. A *structured* question makes the interviewee choose among alternatives given. This restricts the answers to a smaller scope and does not give the option to provide their own solution, which saves the respondent a considerable amount of time. A standard feature of structured surveys is the same vocabulary for all. Question formats have the same meaning for all respondents. All respondents are interviewed in the same way, and the range of possible responses is the same for all. *Unstructured* questions are usually open-ended, allowing the respondent to express their feelings. *Disguised* questions are framed tactfully, decreasing the possibility for a personal question to be threatening, and *undisguised* questions are the opposite (Sreejesh et al., 2014:59-60).

3.4 Implementation

The main research question for the thesis is “How to create the most comprehensive induction programme for new employees in Gigantti Kaari?”.

This will be constructed from theory and research that addresses 1) why induction is essential for companies, 2) how to create an effective step-by-step induction plan, and 3) what changes are necessary to build it.

Two different primary research methods, quantitative and qualitative, were utilised in this study. Quantitative research as a structured survey was used to gather more comprehensive data on the employees' satisfaction from past inductions. The qualitative research data consisted of semi-structured in-depth interviews to gather more specific data from employees on what could have been done differently and improved. The secondary data was collected from the internet, consisting of white papers, articles, and a bibliography related to the study topic.

3.5 Limitations

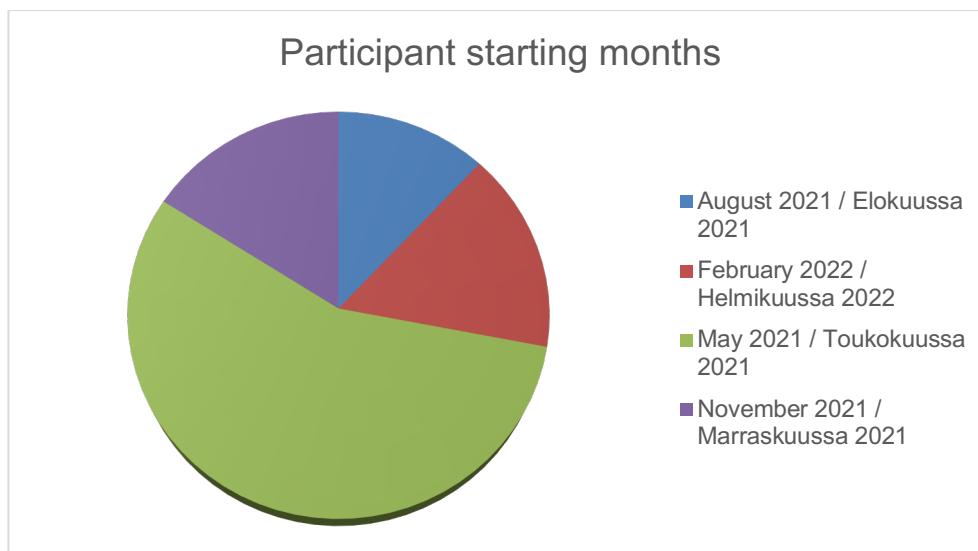
The survey had more minor participants than expected; it was shared in the workplace's communication tools and reminded a few times. However, the announcement of the study published did not reach all the recipients. Due to absences and shortage of employees, the time for interviews was troublesome to arrange to suit the timetables of both interviewer and interviewee. A few interviews were arranged by email, but most of the interviews were held face-to-face. Those face-to-face interviews caused some tension in the interviewees as they were recorded. Also, the researcher feels that, as the store has few employees, the feedback or criticism seems to be hard to say out loud, even anonymously behind closed doors. Some employees had a hard time remembering many details about their induction programme. The interviews were conducted in Finnish and translated to English by the researcher, which might cause a threat to accuracy.

4 Data analysis

4.1 Survey results

A quantitative research method as a survey for employees of Gigantti Kaari was used to measure average satisfaction with the past induction process. 25 employees out of 32, approximately 78% of the store, participated in the survey. The results were analysed mainly by the employees' starting month to measure satisfaction between the more extensive recruitment process in May 2021 and the other three processes in August 2021, November 2021, and February 2022.

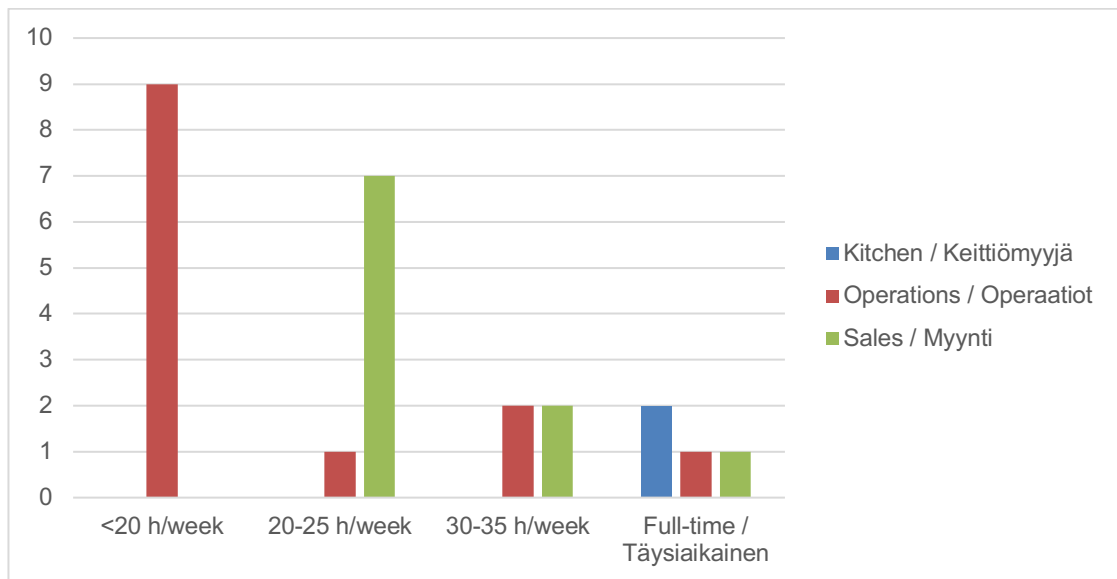
Table 1 Survey participant starting months.



The chart shows that most participants (56%) started in May 2021, 16% of participants in August 2021 and February 2022, and the least (12%) in November 2021.

As mentioned at the beginning of the study, the store Kaari has many part-time employees in both Operations and Sales departments. The survey had a question about the working hours of the participants.

Table 2 Working hours of the participants.



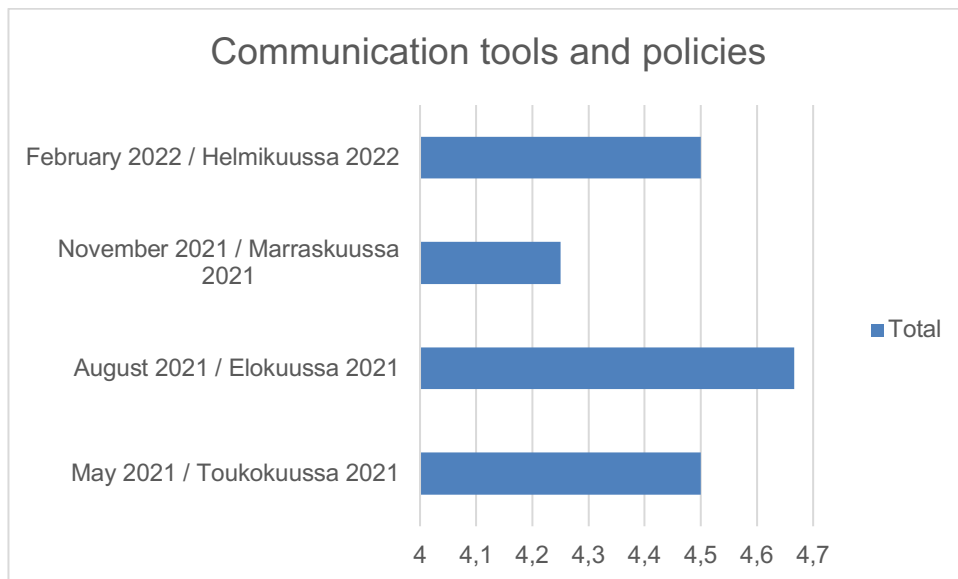
This table shows that most of the Operations employees have a contract of employment for less than 20 hours per week. Employees with 20-25 hours per week are mainly from the Sales department except for one Operations worker. The least number of contracts have been made for 30-35 hours per week; two Operations and two Sales, and full-time only for one from each department - Sales and Operations. The Kitchen & Interior part in Sales has only two employees with a full-time contract.

Table 3 Average company values knowledge

| Starting month | Average of I know the company values / Tiedän yrityksen arvot |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| May 2021 / Toukokuussa 2021 | 4,71 |
| August 2021 / Elokuussa 2021 | 4,67 |
| November 2021 / Marraskuussa 2021 | 4,25 |
| February 2022 / Helmikuussa 2022 | 4,75 |
| Grand Total | 4,64 |

The overall knowledge of company values is relatively high; most of the respondents know most of the company's values. The highest results are from May 2021 and February 2022 starters and a little less from the ones between. It can be seen in these numbers that the store does work by the values.

Table 4 Average knowledge of communication tools and policies.



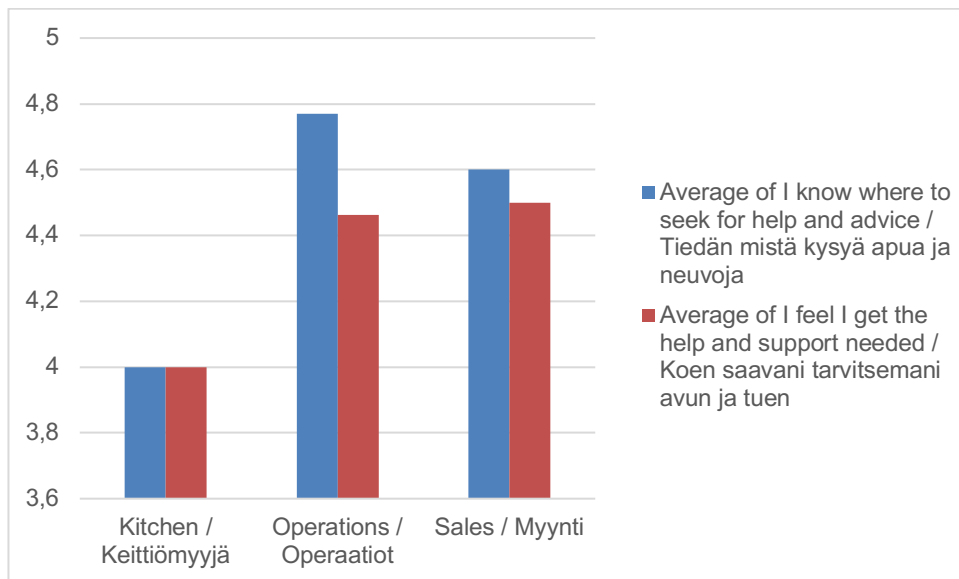
This chart analyses how aware the employees are of the company's communication tools and policies. The November 2021 starters are the least aware of these communication tools and guidelines. The same could be seen in the previous table; November 2021 starters had minor information on the values. The other month's recruits are quite on the same level of knowledge, but workers who started in May 2021 have had more time to learn, as shown in the top bar.

Table 5 Average knowledge of work tasks.

| Starting month | Average of I know what my work tasks include / Tiedän mitä työtehtäväni sisältävät |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| May 2021 / Toukokuussa 2021 | 4,86 |
| August 2021 / Elokuussa 2021 | 4,67 |
| November 2021 / Marraskuussa 2021 | 5 |
| February 2022 / Helmikuussa 2022 | 4,5 |
| Grand Total | 4,8 |

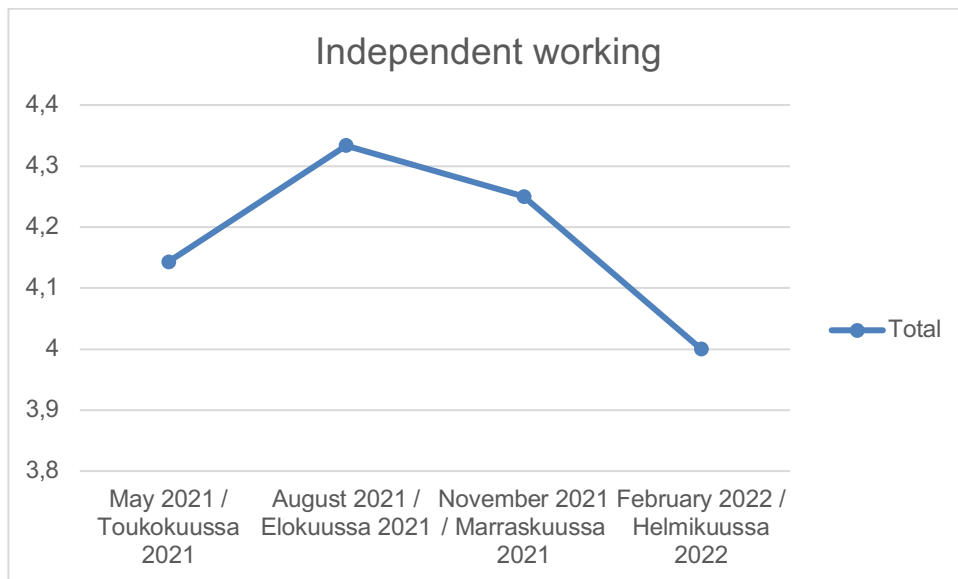
The employees are also quite aware of their sales and operations work tasks. Some hesitation can be seen in the results, as the work tasks are so broad.

Table 6 Knowledge and feeling of getting the support needed.



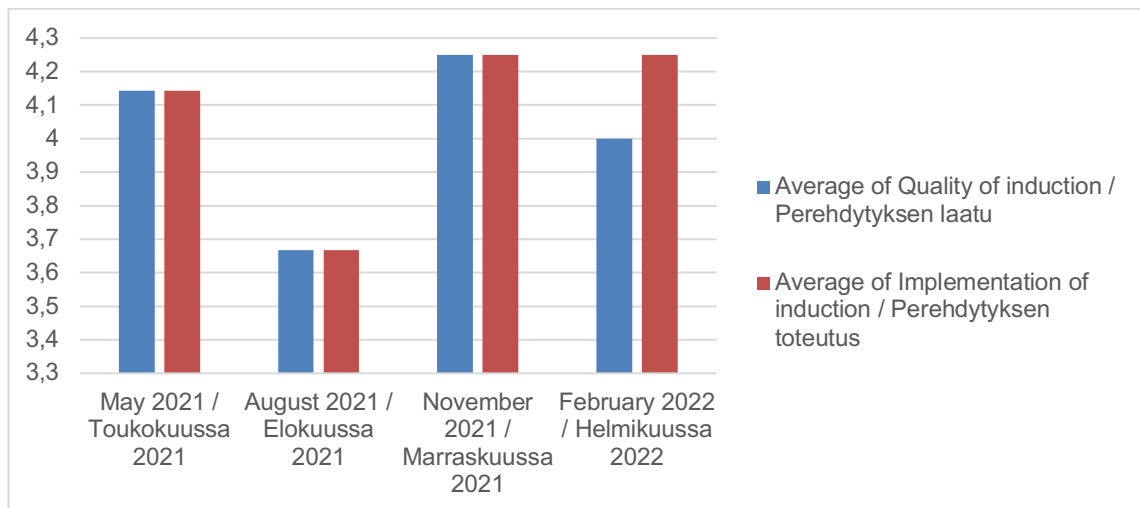
This table is measured by the department people work in, rather than the starting month, as the people in Sales and Operations seek help and support from different people. Starting with the Kitchen, salespeople who also belong to the Sales department feel they receive less support and are less aware of where to seek it than the other employees. The highest result of knowing where to seek help is in the Operations department, with an average of 4.8 out of 5 but a smaller result of receiving the support needed than the Sales department. The results are relatively consistent in both departments.

Table 7 The average ability for independent working.



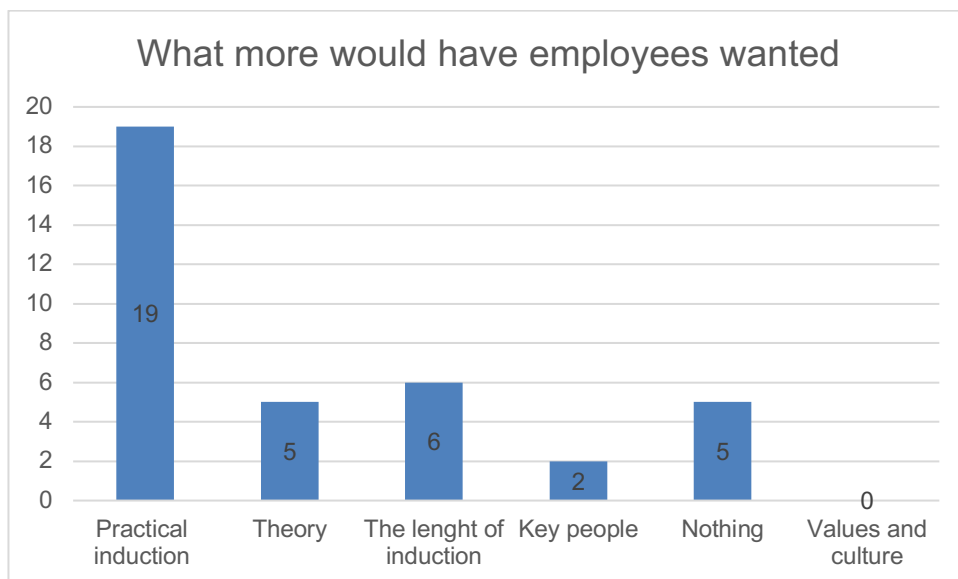
This part of the survey assesses the employees' knowledge and skills and gives the lowest results. If backing up to table 5, where knowledge of own work tasks was measured, this supports the results well. If one does not know what their work tasks include, they cannot work very independently either. One could assume that the ones who started in May 2021 would be able to perform the most independently out of these four starter groups. Still, the overall knowledge of work tasks, feeling of support, and other aspects affect an employee's self-confidence, which might result in fear of failure and, therefore, the possibility or will to work independently.

Table 8 Quality and implementation of induction.



The end of the survey posed two questions for rating the induction process: quality of induction and implementation of induction. The two questions received relatively consistent responses; the same rating was given in both sections; only the February 2022 starters had a slight deviation, the quality rated 4/5, and implementation was 4.25/5. May and November 2021 groups had quite the same process experience, but the August 2021 group was not too satisfied with their process, as the worst rating in the whole survey was 3.67/5.

Table 9 What employees would have wanted more of.



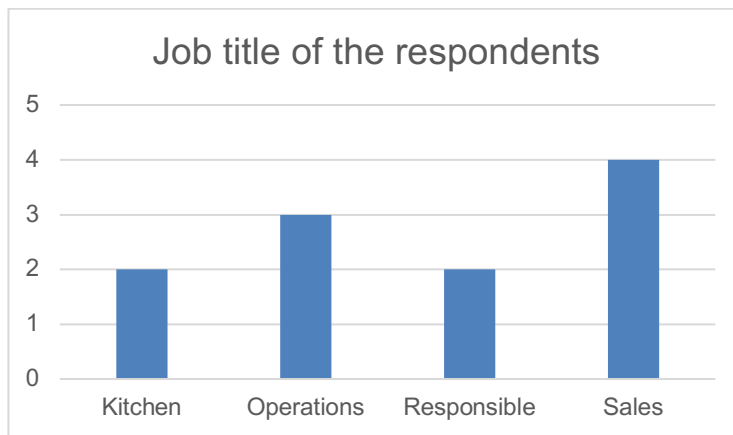
The last part of the survey dealt with what employees would have wanted more of in their induction process. Six options were listed; practical induction, theory, the length of induction, key people in the company, values & culture, or nothing, and it was a multiple answer part. Out of 25 respondents, 19 employees (76%) would have wanted more practical induction before starting to work independently. 20-25% of the respondents wished for more theory and a more extended induction period. 8% felt they did not know enough about the key people in the company, which means the people in 'Back Office' who are the head of departments in Finland. Company values and culture seem to be the expertise of every employee in Kaari, as there was no need for more information in that area. 20% felt they would not need anything more in the induction process, and it is good as it is.

These results are only an overview of employee satisfaction. More detailed research was done with qualitative research as the employees were interviewed. These interview results are analysed in the following chapters.

4.2 Introduction of Interviewees

The subject of the interviews were 11 employees of Gigantti Kaari. The respondents were chosen based on their work tasks and starting date. As shown in figure 6, three Operations employees were selected, two from May 2021 and one from August 2021, as there have not been any starters from November 2021 or February 2022. From the Sales, four employees were interviewed, one from each starting month: May 2021, August 2021, November 2021 and February 2022. In addition, the store's only two kitchen employees were chosen, both of whom started in May 2021. To have a different perspective of the induction, one Sales Leader and a Support Responsible were selected.

Table 10 Job title of the respondents



Most of the interviews were utilised face-to-face, but a few interviews were utilised by email because of the lack of time and problems with time arrangements with part-time employees.

4.3 Employee and customer satisfaction

It can be stated that all the interview participants were unanimous in the fact that induction affects both employee and customer satisfaction. Indeed, many different answers were given in the interviews about how induction and motivation have a connection, but all agreed that they do. One of the employees from the Operations department presented their thoughts as follows:

“Yes, as things have been through, you learn how the tasks are done and then the things are done correctly, and one doesn’t make mistakes continuously, which then affects employee’s self-confidence, which improves motivation.” (Interviewee 1, 11.4.2022)

Another interviewee saw motivation differently, more as getting motivational from the rewarding system but as Viitala (2021:36) states in her book, people feel their work is significant if the position provides justified and tempting rewards and the working environment enables them to succeed at tasks. The following response to the question about motivation can be seen linking to the statement from Viitala:

“It has! It just depends on how the induction is made and how the motivation aspect is in there. For example, when I started, I got motivated by knowing that if I make good sales, the rewards will always be better for me.” (Interviewee 4, 15.4.2022)

As the induction affects the employees' motivation, the induction also has an impact on the customers. A good induction gives a positive picture of the company or in reverse bad induction gives a negative image. As Snell (2006:32) has stated in her study, companies that don't support a comprehensive induction process risk losing employees' productivity and interest in the company. This might reflect the customers as negligent or incapable employees, which might cause various reclamations after the sales transaction. One employee from the Operations department sees the link between induction and customer satisfaction like this:

“Yes, it affects customer satisfaction because if we don't know how to do our work, the customer can see that. Sure, as I said, we learn by doing. Still, suppose there are constantly situations when the employees gather around and wonder how to do things. In that case, it seems quite unprofessional in the eyes of the customer, such as we wouldn't know anything we are doing. But on the other hand, those are the situations where everyone learns.” (Interviewee 3, 11.4.2022)

Related to the motivation and employee satisfaction, questions about common mistakes made in the job and how those affect the employee were deployed. The part of interviews about satisfaction got various answers, but the one about how the mistakes affect the employee had both negative and positive thoughts. Some had an opinion that errors are only positive since one cannot learn without them:

I would see that it is a positive thing for employees since you cannot make progress if you don't make mistakes. It gives perspective when you are the one spotting the errors. It demands the employer to provide continuous feedback, induction and commitment in both ways. (Interviewee 2. 11.4.2022)

While one saw it as a financial loss as the business is for making money, some informants saw an opposing side of the continuous failure. Looking back to the argument from Viitala (2021:85), induction also influences mental well-being at

work in many ways. The better one can perform on tasks, the more significant are experiences of succeeding and trust in their development. The informant's response supports Viitala's argument well about mental well-being affecting employee satisfaction:

I assume that continuous mistakes affect one's self-confidence; at least, I felt like this initially. If I made many mistakes, I was afraid of starting to do things I would have probably known how to since I felt insecure. This also causes more work for managers. But for example, I found out after four months the reason for why it is so essential to deliver the product from our system, as the purchase is not seen in our store's results. It would be good to go through the cause-and-effect relations during the induction programme, so everyone knows why to do something. (Interviewee 1, 11.4.2022)

4.4 Emotional engagement in the workplace

The results of how the employees feel their opinions and suggestions are heard in the store support perfectly Torrington's (2020:288) argument that emotional engagement is a situation in which employees have emotional ties to their managers and feel that they are interested in their development and opinions. All the informants gave the impression in the interviews that they respect their managers and are happy in the workplace. As one of the informants from the Sales department presents the answer if their opinions are heard:

“Many times! And I'm lucky my directors and leaders have respect for me, so they listen when I have some ideas for making the workplace better or if something seems odd in my opinion.”
(Interviewee 4, 15.4.2022)

As it can be felt in the answer above, respect goes both ways in the store of Gigantti Kaari, the employees respect the managers, and the managers appreciate their employees. As mentioned in the introduction of the case company, one of the values is openness which seems to reflect in the way that opinions are heard, whether it comes from a regular employee or their superiors. Another excellent example of this is one of the Operations employee's responses to the same question:

“Absolutely! They have received suggestions very well and even giving opinions to the Store Manager who accepts almost all the ideas we suggest. And from the first day, we were told that we can arrange the Support Centre as we want since it is our work area, and we know how it works the best.”

(Interviewee 1, 11.4.2022)

4.5 The satisfaction of the induction

It can be stated that all the interviewees had an opinion that the induction process was reasonably successful. Some of the respondents felt that this was the best induction they had ever received and wouldn't change anything, as one of the Sales employees stated:

“The induction was long, comprehensive and detailed for different subject areas which there are many. Relative to what we had to learn, I think it was very comprehensive, and I have never been in a longer induction period than two weeks like that. I think it was amazing.” (Interviewee 5, 16.4.2022)

Still, some respondents thought that the induction had some flaws, for example, being too short and would have wanted more practical training before starting to work independently, even though the job is primarily learning by doing it. As one of the operations employees stated:

“Maybe the challenge in Gigantti Kaari has been the fact that everyone started from the zero; if one started in any other Gigantti, there would be more support from all the employees, which at this point we have more as well. We had quite a small number of inductors as there were only Support Responsible, Cashier Responsible and Aftersales Responsible. We must give them time to learn, and I feel we have moved forward as fewer people have started and we have had those training shifts for everyone” (Interviewee 3, 11.4.2022)

This gives the impression that there is not enough time to learn everything in each induction process, and it is good to have training shifts even for the older employees to rehearse things they might have forgotten during their time in the company. For the new employees, the time used to train the new systems and the recruit's needs assessment could be better as this person stated:

More time could be used for learning, especially the whole new things, i.e., the operating systems and the inductor could perform a needs assessment for the inductee to know what they need more time with. (Interviewee 10, 18.4.2022)

In addition, a few people responded in the survey that they would have wanted more of the theory of the work tasks, as newcomers have started after May 2021, there has not been reserved enough time to go through theory in the Operations department as one of the department's employees told in the interview:

“We should have reserved some time for a theory as we had for the first employees who started in May because we haven't had suitable time to do that now. Recruits' induction days should include more theory of the different tasks in the Operations department. Academy portal exercises could be useful but didn't provide any skills for practical work tasks for me at least.” (Interviewee 9, 17.4.2022).

Even though the practical training is crucial for the learning curve in this job, the theory part is equally important to set a learning base. As the first interviewee pointed out, it would be essential to learn, i.e., about the cause-and-effect relations in their job; this would encourage the people to do tasks by the book and not be negligent if told to do something.

Viitala's (2021:82-84) argument about how the manager or possibly a co-worker follows the development, and the induction isn't finished before the newcomer feels like it suits the opinion of one of the Sales department employees stating a development issue in their induction process:

“In my opinion, the induction before new employees meet their first customers is good, but the biggest development happens when they are with the customers. I think that's when we as inductors should be even more present.” (Interviewee 11, 19.4.2022).

As follow-up is part of the induction process, should it be visible at the start and when a person starts working more independently.

The results of the interviews were priceless since there has not been a feedback request after the induction processes. The opinions and experiences

from the side of an inductee are usually an eye-opening way to research what to improve, and these results have proven to be successful.

Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis was created to find the gaps and possible improvement areas in the current induction programme of Gigantti Kaari. As mentioned in the introduction, all the stores of Gigantti have had their own induction process and style for recruit training. Even though the future holds a new implementation for all the stores to have a similar path for induction, there are still differences, especially in Gigantti Kaari, as the staffing is made differently. Some of the issues in providing comprehensive induction in Kaari are the time reserved for the process and the shortage of employees.

The research made for the study points out the importance of induction and a comprehensive one as it gives the first impression of the company, either good or bad. It can be stated that induction is a large part of the relationship between the company and its employees, starting from the moment a potential recruit steps into the interview room and until the day one leaves. Induction can affect employee retention and even employee mental well-being. Since businesses don't have the time to waste money or time, employers should consider the fact that it takes unnecessarily long for the recruit to get familiar with the job description and tasks without a formal induction programme, which directly affects the employer and employee as well as the motivation and long-term employment relationship. Excellent comprehensive induction and a positive way of presenting the job have a substantial impact on the future employee's thoughts of the workplace; if an inductor is not motivated himself, could he cause motivational issues to the recruit as well. Induction impacts customer satisfaction, as only well-trained, up to date employees can deliver quality customer service, making the customer trust the process and thus might result in fewer reclamations.

After performing qualitative and quantitative research about the past and current level of induction for the company employees, we have a clear answer; the

induction has been well organised the whole time, with some differences in the four induction processes but relatively good implementation. One of the most critical findings from the survey and in-depth interviews are the length of induction. The employees presented that there is not enough time to learn and build the confidence in doing the job independently as not being sure and failing can bring uncertainty to tasks one would already know how to do.

The induction programme is mostly the same as before with some additions to it as there are various aspects to learn. The induction plan created, which can be found in Appendix 3, has theory lessons for each task, three weeks of training to lengthen the process by one week and the fourth week to discuss and rehearse parts that feel uncertain. The practical side of training is built to support the theory with detailed and comprehensive training. In addition, a checklist of the essential parts, a way of keeping track of an employee's skill level and continuous training throughout the career in the company for refreshing memory of less common job tasks, as well as constant endeavour to develop employees and the interaction between employees and management in the store.

As all the recruits are individuals and their needs for training might differ, the induction plan cannot be done in detail; thus, it's just an overview of the potential implementation. The inductor cannot simply just trust the process, but one must be able to adapt to the needs of the inductee. The suggestion is to have development discussions not just on how a recruit has succeeded but one to reveal points of improvement in the induction process. Therefore, the management can keep creating and improving a more comprehensive and successful induction programme.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey questions and average responses were analysed by starting month.

| | May.21 | Aug.21 | Nov.21 | Feb.22 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| I know the company values | 4,71 | 4,667 | 4,75 | 4,75 |
| I know what my work tasks include | 4,857 | 4,667 | 5 | 4,5 |
| I know where to seek for help and advice | 4,714 | 4,333 | 4,75 | 4,5 |
| I feel I get the help and support needed | 4,429 | 4,333 | 4,25 | 4,75 |
| I know our communication tools and policies | 4,5 | 4,667 | 4,25 | 4,5 |
| How independently can I work? | 4,143 | 4,333 | 4,25 | 4 |
| Quality of induction | 4,143 | 3,667 | 4,25 | 4 |
| Implementation of induction | 4,143 | 3,667 | 4,25 | 4,25 |
| What would I have wanted more? (Multiple answers) | | | | |
| Practical induction | 0,714 | 1,00 | 0,50 | 0,50 |
| Theory | 0,285 | - | - | 0,25 |
| The length of induction | 0,285 | - | 0,25 | 0,25 |
| Key people | 0,071 | - | 0,25 | 0,25 |
| Nothing | 0,142 | - | 0,50 | - |
| Values and culture | - | - | - | - |

Appendix 2. In-Depth Interview Questions

Job title?

(Operations, Sales, Kitchen or department responsible)

When did you start?

(May, August, November, February, or other)

Any previous experience of induction as an inductee or inductor?

How does induction affect your job?

How well do you know the systems used in work after X time?

How independently can you work?

How would you describe the current induction?

What could have been made differently? What are the flaws in the current one?

How would you develop the process?

What are the most common mistakes newcomers make?

How do you believe these mistakes affect the employee or the manager?

Do you think induction has a connection with motivation? How?

Does induction affect customer satisfaction? Example?

Do you feel your opinions and suggestions are heard?

Anything else?

Some questions were left out if the person interviewed was a Sales Leader or a person responsible for a subdepartment.

Appendix 3. Induction plan

Day 1. The employees spend the day with the Store Manager learning about the culture and values of the company and store.

Day 2. They have a day in the store doing the Academy online portal training and getting to know the workplace and co-workers.

After the two days will start the on-the-job training for the recruits. Each person responsible for a subdepartment in Operations and managers from the Sales department will list the most common and essential aspects of work in their subdepartment. This is for helping to remember what to teach and to be able to mark down what is taught already. In addition, the inductor will go through cause-and-effect relations to the tasks they are teaching about.

Week 1. The **operation** employee starts the week learning about the theory of the job guided by the Cashier Responsible. After that, begins on-the-job training for cashier tasks directed by the Cashier Responsible and co-workers. This will be for the first week to get to know the systems and routines. / The **sales** employee will learn computer programs and practices used in work and the support services sold, for instance, insurance, support agreements, financial agreements, etc. They learn from these service products and the regulations of the services. / **Kitchen** employees will go through the same training as the regular Sales employees.

Week 2. The **operations** employee again starts the week with a short theory lesson and moves on to learn Warehouse work tasks guided by the Aftersales Responsible, including goods intake, repair monitoring, and handling other everyday tasks. / The **sales** employee will be given their login credentials for all the different programs. The training for all the support services will continue, and they will start learning how to use the systems 'on the floor' and serve customers on their own. They will be starting to work independently while another experienced employee is shadowing them. / The **kitchen** employee will

follow a more experienced Kitchen employee for a week. This way, the person learns how all the design software is used and the most critical aspects of the actual Kitchen designers' work tasks.

Week 3. The **operation** employee will have the same theory lesson about Support and then move on to do those work tasks guided by the Support Responsible. / The **sales** employees might have a few product representatives visiting and teaching about the products, the product and support service training continues, and they work even more independently. / The **kitchen** employee continues to work alongside the experienced employee but more individually.

Week 4. In reviewing all the tasks, the person responsible for the subdepartment in the **Operations** department goes through their aspects of the job, and the employee can tell for which they need more training. After the new employee has learned the essential elements, one can start working independently. / As the **sales** employees have been doing the job alone for a couple of weeks, a review discussion will be held by the Sales department managers going through the aspects to improve. The employee has the freedom to talk about possible difficulties they have faced, and they get a recap of the first weeks and most essential services. / In the **Kitchen** department, the most critical aspects are reviewed. The kitchen employee and the manager can have an open discussion about the difficulties one has faced during the first weeks and bring up some things one would want to learn more about.

The manager and the person responsible for a subdepartment will be monitoring the learning curve and help and support will be continuously available. For supporting the monitoring and helping to keep track, a learning Excel will be in use, marked down as the newcomer has learned specific aspects of the job. In addition, the recruit is presented with questions about the induction programme to bring up points of improvement.

After two months, the employee will have a development discussion, where one can state the aspects most complex and have days with responsible teaching those tasks for them if needed.

After four months, another development discussion will be held with the employee to review thoughts, difficulties, and positive experiences.

The development discussions continue indefinitely with Department Managers and Store Manager a few times a year to share thoughts and bring up grievances, positive experiences, and aspects to improve. Also, some training shifts will be arranged for everyone occasionally to iterate elements of work after a particular time.