AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ISSUES FACING EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE INDUCTION
- The Case of New Employee Induction at the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän lopputyön tarkoituksena on ollut tutkia Skanskan Pohjoismaisen Hankintayksikön perehdyttämisprosessia ja löytää mahdolliset ongelmat uusien työntekijöiden perehdytyksessä. Tutkimus täten luo pohjaa uuden tehokkaan perehdytysprosessin luomiselle Skanskan hankintayksikössä. Yleisesti ottaen tutkimus korostaa uusien työntekijöiden perehdyttämisen tärkeyttä ja nimeää osan niistä ongelmista joita yritysten ja johdon täytyy ottaa huomioon, jotta uusien työntekijöiden perehdytys olisi mahdollisimman tehokasta ja onnistunutta.

Tarve juuri tämänlaiselle tutkimustyölle syntyi, kun Skanskalla työntekijöille aiemmin teetetty kysely osoitti että työntekijät eivät olleet täysin tyytyväisiä saamaansa perehdytykseen. Lisäksi vuonna 2009 perustettu pohjoismainen hankintayksikkö koki tarvetta perehdytysprosessille, joka olisi suunniteltu nimenomaan tämän kyseisen yksikön uusille työntekijöille. Jotta tällainen prosessi saataisiin suunniteltua, on tärkeää ensin selvittää nykyinen tilanne työntekijöiden näkökulmasta.

Tutkimus on toteutettu sähköisellä kyselylomakkeella, joka lähetettiin 53:lle Skanskan pohjoismaisen hankintayksikön työntekijälle, jotka olivat aloittaneet Skanskalle viimeisen vuoden sisällä. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli vastata kysymyksiin: mitkä ovat ne asiat jotka tulee huomioida uusien työntekijöiden perehdytyksessä, mikä on nykyinen tilanne Skanskan hankintayksikön uusien työntekijöiden perehdytyksessä ja mitä mahdollisia ongelmia Skanskan hankintayksikön nykyisessä perehdytysprosessissa on.

Tulokset osoittavat, että Skanskan hankintayksikön työntekijöistä osa on ollut erittäin tyytyväisiä tarjottuun perehdytykseen, kun taas osa kokee perehdytyksen olleen suhteellisen heikosti toteutettu, lisäksi pieni osa sanoo että ei ole saanut minkäänlaista perehdytystä työtehtäviinsä. Kyselystä saadut erittäin vaihtelevat tulokset paljastavat, että perehdytystä on tarjottu erittäin vaihtelevasti ja yhteisten perehdytysprosessia ohjaavien suuntaviivojen puute saattaisi olla syy siihen että kaikki esimiehet eivät ole tarjonneet yhtä kattavaa perehdytystä uusille työntekijöille. Lisäksi tutkimustulokset ilmaisevat että etenkin perehdytyssuunnitelma, mentorointi ja esimiehen paikallaolo ensimmäisenä päivänä koetaan olennaisiksi onnistuneen perehdytyksen toteuttamisessa.

ABSTRACT

Title: An Investigation into the Issues Facing Effective Employee Induction - The case of new employee induction at the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit.

The main objective of this study was to investigate what are the issues and possible problems that Skanska's Nordic Procurement Unit is facing in their induction and how the employees themselves see the current situation of the induction.

The need for this research arose at the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit, when a previously administered survey showed that not all the employees were satisfied with their induction. Moreover, the young Nordic unit felt that there was a need for a concentrated induction process created especially for the employees of this particular unit. Before planning the new process, it would be essential to map the current situation and define the issues that have to be taken into account when planning the induction.

A critical review of the literature was carried out and an online questionnaire was administered to 53 employees who had joined the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit within the past year.

The results revealed that there is no common process followed at the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit as some of the employees received very thorough induction whereas other employees barely had any induction. Furthermore, the findings illustrate that the issues that the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit should take into account regarding the induction are the induction plan and the presence of the immediate supervisor on the newcomer's first day.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's world organisations cannot be looked at as bureaucratic establishments anymore, but instead they are complex entities comprising individuals. Hence, for organisations to be successful and competitive, they need to be able to maximise their employees' contributions and commitment (Brewster *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, job security from the employer's side is not inevitable and the employees themselves do not join an organisation for a lifetime. This employee mobility creates a growing need for efficient induction; to make the employees to create value from the very beginning. Yet, it is not only a question of effectiveness, but also employee commitment. A well-managed induction process can facilitate the employee's to socialisation to the organisation and its culture, and encourage commitment to work and pursuit of the company's goals. Moreover, several studies show that ineffective or insufficient induction may lead to costly employee turnover.

The topic for this dissertation emerged from the needs of Skanska's Nordic Procurement Unit as they were aware of the importance of induction and saw the need for development within the current induction process in their department. The aim of this dissertation is to investigate what are seen to be the most important issues within induction and what can hinder the induction to be efficient. Thus, the goal is to learn whether the employees at the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit think that the induction is efficient and furthermore investigate and identify those issues that cause problems during the induction phase at Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit. This research should therefore allow the researcher to point out the particular areas within the induction at Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit that need to be improved or if changes should be made to the induction at all.

Another important objective of this study is to describe the current situation at Skanska Nordic Procurement, so that future actions can be planned using the results of this study as a basis to rationalise possible changes. This is why the research concentrates on finding descriptive data and using causal relations only to confirm the importance of some of the data. To be able to reach the above mentioned goals, the scope of the study is kept

extensive when it comes to the concept of inductions, so that as many issues as possible can be researched to allow the researcher to discover what are the most important areas of focus for future improvements.

It should be taken into account that this study examines the induction from the employees' viewpoint and only within one department of a large organisation; therefore the results may be somewhat limited. However, as the goal is not only to define induction and the issues within it, but to find improvement areas for this particular department, the research perspective is justified.

2. SKANSKA

Skanska is an international project development and construction company who is part of the Fortune 500 and a member of UN Global Compact. It is one of the world's leading groups with expertise in construction, development of commercial and residential projects and public-private partnerships and it has 4,000 repeat customers. Skanska is also well known for its environmental expertise and green projects and they aim to be the leading green project developer (Skanska, 2010).

Skanska is originally a Swedish company, but it became international already in the mid 1950's, the US now being Skanska's largest market. One part of Skanska's strategy is to establish itself as a leader in safety, ethics, people development and in green and risk management (Skanska, 2011).

Skanska has 52,000 employees. Employee development is important for Skanska and numerous training possibilities are available for the employees at all skill levels.

Skanska's Nordic Procurement Unit (from here on called NPU) employs 210 people in Finland, Sweden and Norway and it started its operations in 2009, therefore it is a rather young unit at Skanska. NPU provides a range of procurement related services to the line organisation in the Nordic Business Units and to Nordic initiatives. Having its own procurement unit in cooperation with these three Nordic countries helps in providing more coordinated expertise support for projects and enables better utilisation of the purchase volumes when negotiating framework agreements.

The services that the NPU provides include project procurement, framework agreements and international procurement. In addition to these primary services, the NPU can also supply the line organisation with logistics, processes and procurement tools, training programs and handling of supplier bonuses (Skanska, 2011).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 DEFINITION OF INDUCTION

After the screening and selection of new employees during recruitment, the next step is to orient and train them on their new roles, as well as to famliarise them with the organisation. Tyson and York (2000; 142) explain that the goal of induction is "that new employees become integrated as soon as possible functionally and socially into the organization and its environment". Usually the induction is seen to include a checklist, some reading material, post-induction evaluation, a formal program and/or a longer orientation program (Compton *et al.*, 2009 and Dessler, 2009). The induction should be able to make the new employees to feel welcome, make them learn the company policies and procedures as well as to make them understand the company in a broader sense – to understand the company's past and the present, the company culture and the company's vision of the future (Dessler, 2009 and Caruth *et al.*, 2010). Moreover, a crucial part of the induction is to explain the new role – what it includes, how it is done and what the expectations are for the employee performing this role.

Induction is often rather vaguely defined in literature, as some authors prefer to talk about orientation, newcomer training or only socialisation and socialisation strategies. In this dissertation induction is discussed to mean aspects of initial entry, introduction to the organisation, orientation to the role and the early stages of socialisation.

3.2 IMPORTANCE OF INDUCTION

Induction of new staff members is such an integral part of managing people in an organisation that it merits special consideration (Tyson and York, 2000; 139). After all, as Gabriel (2008) notes, employees are a "critical source of competitive advantage" (p. 133) in an organisation. Dessler (2009; 160) claims that the induction is needed for the new employees to perform their jobs satisfactorily and to provide them with the basic background information of the company. However, induction is ideally more than the mere provision of an info package. The organisation should aim in making the new employee to perform the tasks better than just satisfactorily and facilitate an

environment for continuous learning. Zachary emphasises that because of the competitive business climate today, "the need for continuous learning has never been greater" (2005; xxi).

Many authors agree that if a proper induction is neglected, the results can be severe. Research by Thomson NETg indicates UK businesses could be losing up to 2 billion pounds a year in employee activity because of unsound personnel induction processes (Training Journal, 2006; 8). Koehler (1992) also notes that significant employee turnover occurs rather shortly after entering the company. Lloyd (2010; 49) gives an even more detailed estimate, claiming that the employee-employer relationship is in the most vulnerable state during the first 30 days. Furthermore, Torrington *et al.* (2005; 174) quote research which shows that 17% of the newly recruited personnel left within three months and 42% left within 12 months after starting their new job in the researched organisation. Part of the reason for higher turnover among new recruits can be a result of poor selection procedures (Koehler, 1992), however more often the high turnover is linked to inefficient induction (Compton *et al.* 2009; 183) that has not facilitated the rapid and effective socialisation of the newcomer (Schein, 1988; 54).

Wilson (2008; 32) asserts that "an individual seeks less information, and therefore processes less information, the longer he or she occupies an organizational position". From this it could be derived that in addition to slowing down the employee turnover, the benefit of early training in the form of induction is that the employee is more responsive to the information, therefore able to learn more. Thus it is important that the induction is a thoroughly planned process, so that the responsiveness of the employee is utilised in the best possible way.

Induction mutually benefits employees and employers. It gives the new recruit a less stressful start and helps the employee to get to know the new colleagues and the company culture. The employer then again benefits from better work results with fewer mistakes. Furthermore a good induction enables the employer to get to know the new recruit during the process (Lepistö, 2004; 56-57). As Kupias and Peltola state, in its most extensive meaning, induction improves not just the new employee, but also the whole work community and the organisation (2009; 19). A well-guided employee starts creating

value and results faster, cooperates with the other employees more smoothly and shares his or her existing know-how.

Besides, a good and well performed induction program can enhance the quality, performance and morale of the employee (Kenneth et al. 1992; 6). This is rather clear, as when the induction succeeds in describing the role and showing how to manage the tasks it is a lot easier for the employee to perform the tasks well and efficiently. If the new employee understands already from the beginning how his or her work contributes towards the success of the company, he or she is more likely to maintain the morale as he sees the meaning in what he is doing. To develop the idea of meaningful work further, being able to show how the company's services or products can contribute to the society can foster a sense of pride in the employer organisation, thus again maintaining the morale of the worker (Compton *et al.*, 2009). Liebowitz (2010) also speaks about the importance of involving the employees with the company's values and social responsibility programs in the very beginning of their employment, thus enabling the employees to start working towards the values immediately. From another viewpoint, this as well could help the new employees to think highly of their new employer, which again can solidify commitment.

3.3 DURATION OF THE INDUCTION PERIOD

There are several opinions on how to calculate the time span of induction. The traditional induction could be seen to start on the newcomer's first day and last until the newcomer has adopted the work patterns (Kjelin & Kuusisto, 2003; 49), however many authors depict how in real life the induction in many organisations is only the orientation provided for the newcomers on their first weeks – in some cases this orientation lasting only for the first two days.

Nevertheless, the company should already utilise the recruitment stage to be part of induction. The first contacts with the new employee are good for communicating information about the company and conveying the company values (Kupias & Peltola, 2009; 72). Using a realistic job description, the company can also diminish the possible negative effects of the emerging psychological contract (Popovich & Wanous, 1982).

As concerns the actual length of the induction process, Kjelin and Kuusisto (2003) claim that employees in knowledge work usually need about 6 months to master the tasks and settle in to the new organisational environment, moreover the employees at executive and management level feel that the familiarisation and learning phase lasts for almost a year. Furthermore, Davis and Kleiner argue that the induction process can last for months depending on the position and the employee (2001; 48). In other words, giving a certain time span for the induction phase is only indicative, as in the end the individual traits set the time frame.

Jokisaari and Nurmi (2009) have a somewhat different view on the duration of the induction period. They argue that the first 3-6 months in the new job can be seen as a "honeymoon" period during which the new recruits are given slightly easier tasks and are influenced by the novelty glow to such an extent that they ignore any possible negative concerns. Moreover they further maintain that supervisor assistance and feedback play an important role during the 6-12 months after the newcomer's entry to the company. This again derives from the idea that the newcomer would receive more challenging tasks while at the same time losing the new recruit's excitement. Therefore it could be deduced that the supervisor should not opt out after the first 6 months, but instead intensify the newcomer support. Besides, Jokisaari and Nurmi point out that the supervisor has the power to direct resources and opportunities to the new employee, helping to further job enrichment and satisfaction, thus progressing the process of socialisation (2009; 531).

3.4 SOCIALISATION

Induction is a component of the socialisation process, which is a continuing process of infusing the attitudes, values and behavioural patterns that the company expects into the new employee's mind (Dessler 2009; 160). In other words, socialisation can be seen as the process by which the new employees acquire the social knowledge and skills necessary to embrace an organizational role (Van Maanen & Schein, 1977; 3) and how they internalise the norms within an organisation (Wilson, 2008; 33). Usually it is complicated to implement employees' social adaptation through a formal induction programme, as the socialisation mainly happens gradually and the level of integration can change depending on the individual (Tyson and York, 2000). However, the induction

implemented by the organisation should aim towards the strengthening of the individual's socialisation, to best overcome the already mentioned threat of new employee turnover.

When socialisation is effective the individual's goals can be united with the organisation goals. Moreover an ineffective socialisation process can lead to rejection from the employee's side (Compton *et al.*, 2009; 183). In reality it is quite unlikely that a person's values and goals would match those of the organisation completely. Rather than leading to a complete unity of the goals or contrarily to total rejection, it is more likely that the employee stays somewhere in between these extremes. Also Van Maanen and Schein claim that "socialisation is continuous throughout one's career within an organisation" (1979; 24). Nonetheless, being able to convey a positive image of the company's goals and values during the induction phase can persuade the newcomer to assimilate with them, hence assenting to the behavioural patterns of the company as well.

3.4.1 Reichers' model of the rate of socialisation

Reichers (1987) claims that interaction and social contacts play a central role in the newcomer socialisation. In addition the interaction between the established employees and the newcomer can help the newcomer to learn his or her role faster and to understand the requirements for the role.

Table 1. Socialisation rates as a function of proaction by newcomers and insiders (Reichers, 1987; 282)

Insider Proaction		Newcomer Proaction	
High	1. Intermediate Rate	2. Rapid Rate
Low	3. Slow Rate	4. Intermediate Rate
	Low	High

The rapid rate of socialisation is undoubtedly the most desired rate of socialisation. As Table 1. illustrates, this rate can be acquired when both the insiders and the newcomers actively seek interaction with each other. Hence Reichers' model would suggest that the induction period should encourage interaction between the established and new organisational members. However, Asforth *et al.* point out that not only does the amount of interaction affect the rate of socialisation, but also the quality of the interaction should be taken into account (2007; 46). Interaction of good quality involves delivering information that is accurate, timely and tailored to the newcomer's needs. This information should also be delivered via an appropriate medium and in a constructive manner that reinforces receptiveness (Asforth *et al.*, 2007; 46).

3.4.2 Socialisation tactics

Socialisation tactics deserve an introduction within this research, because they have been influencing different methods that are used in employee induction and also because these tactics provide a good and extensive viewpoint to socialisation, hence to the induction process as well. The twelve socialisation tactics were presented by Van Maanen and Schein (1977). These tactics can be used to enhance the socialisation process; nevertheless they can occur simultaneously and without anybody actually implementing them (Van Maanen & Schein, 1977; 36). Jones (cited in Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003; 140) has divided these tactics into institutionalised and individualised tactics.

Table 2. Socialisation tactics (Kjelin & Kuusisto, 2003; 140 and Johns & Saks, 2005; 250-251)

Institutionalised Tactics	Individualised Tactics
Collective	Individual
Formal	Informal
Sequential	Random
Fixed	Variable
Serial	Disjunctive
Investiture	Divestiture

Collective tactic refers to newcomers being socialised as a group, where the experience is the same for all the newcomers, whereas individual tactic refers to the newcomer learning through a tailor-made individual induction programme.

Formal tactic refers to providing a formal learning programme for the newcomers, with a certain format and duration, whereas informal tactic refers to the newcomer learning by doing tasks in practice, each newcomer concentrating only on his or her role from the beginning.

Sequential tactic refers to a sequence during the socialisation process where the role evolves clearly, one step at a time, whereas random tactic refers to a situation where there is an ambiguous sequence and the role is rather open in the beginning.

Fixed tactic refers to a fixed duration of the socialisation process and the newcomer is likely to have a plan, whereas variable tactic refers to a situation where there is no plan and the progress of the learning process is not followed.

Serial tactic refers to an experienced employee participating in the socialisation process, whereas disjunctive tactic refers to a situation where there are no proper role models and the newcomers are creating their role by themselves.

Investiture tactic can also be called debasement or hazing and it refers to the organisation giving newcomers very basic, even undervalued tasks and stripping away their initial self-confidence, whereas divestiture tactic refers to taking the newcomers' experience and know-how into account and letting the newcomers to utilise their abilities.

(Kjelin & Kuusisto, 2003; 140 and Johns & Saks, 2005; 250-251)

More than actually giving any proposition on how to organise the induction, these tactics depict different situations taking place during the organisational socialisation. Several studies have been conducted to examine whether individual or institutionalised tactics are better and more effective, however, it depends mostly on the organisation and the role at hand, which tactics take place or are implemented.

3.5 MENTORING

A widely used training and employee development method is to assign a more experienced employee to guide and teach the new recruit (Wexley & Latham, 1991; 147). This person is known as a mentor. The role of the mentor is therefore to be an advisor who helps in the integration of the new employee (Miller, 2006; 14). Miller also adds that having a mentor enables functioning feedback possibilities and enhances communication (2006; 14) which both are seen to be a crucial part of efficient employee induction (Koehler, 1992). Moreover, mentoring plays an important role in the socialisation process, and assigning a mentor can be seen as an effort by the organisation to strengthen the socialisation of the newcomer (Gabriel, 2008; 272).

The mentor is meant to be someone with whom the new employee can identify and who is there when the new employee has questions and needs help. The mentor is also expected to be a role model for the new recruit. If the mentor has the same tasks as the new employee, the new employee can start his or her learning by observing how the mentor performs his or her job (Wexley & Latham, 1991; 147). When using a mentor to this extent described by Wexley and Latham, it is crucial to understand how much the mentor has power in affecting how the new employee will see the company and his or her role in the company. Therefore it is important to choose the mentors carefully. With choosing the most suitable mentor for the mentee, the management can avoid a *false consensus effect* that could emerge if the mentor teaches the tasks as he or she would like to learn them (Von Bergen *et al.*, 2001). Miller (2006; 14) advises the management to acquire a large selection of mentors to be able to match the best possible mentor-mentee profiles. It should also be kept in mind that the best in his or her job may not be the best instructor. Actually, it is more vital to choose someone who genuinely likes his or her job, so that he or she can give a positive image for the mentee (Kjelin & Kuusisto, 2003; 196). If the mentor is carefully selected, the mentoring is more likely to achieve a positive outcome in employee commitment as well. Simosi (2010; 305) points out that new employees are likely to perceive a mentor's positive orientation towards them as indicative of the employing company's support. Therefore they will reciprocally become more committed.

An advantage of mentoring used in the induction phase can be that it helps in promoting, creating and maintaining a mentoring culture in the organisation, which Zachary claims to be a source for organisational vitality as well as a source for individual and organisational growth and development (2005; 4). Furthermore, Zachary emphasises the relationship skills that can be learned in a mentoring culture, as mentoring can deepen the bond and rapport between employees throughout the organisation, thus creating productivity and making people feel more connected to the organisation (2005; 4-5).

3.5 ISSUES WITHIN INDUCTION

The previous chapters prove that induction is extremely important, yet a complex matter when it comes to managing people. Hence the literature discusses several issues that can cause problems during the newcomer entry and induction phase. This section points out those issues that organisations should especially consider, when orienting their new employees.

3.5.1 First day

Starting at a new job can be stressful - especially the first day can cause anxiety and nervousness. Thus it is important to make sure that the newcomer's first day is planned well and that it gives a good first impression about the company and the working environment. The supervisor should make sure that the practicalities are taken care of e.g. e-mail account, access keys, desk etc. (Craig, 2008). Even though these may sound like small matters, a lot of idle time can be avoided if the basics are taken care of. Moreover, ignoring the importance of the first day practicalities does not only hinder the new employee to start working efficiently from day one, but may also cause the new employee to start resisting the socialisation subconsciously if he or she does not feel welcomed and expected from the beginning.

In addition to the practicalities, the presence of the immediate supervisor during the first day is crucial for creating a positive impression and providing a good start for the induction (Craig, 2008, Davis & Kleiner, 2001; 47, Fowler, 1996; 27, Kupias & Peltola, 2009; 58 and Skeats, 1991; 49-51). When the supervisor is there to meet the newcomer personally on the first day, the newcomer feels that he or she is perceived as an individual and not just a component in a bureaucratic machine (Kupias & Peltola, 2009; 58). Also, as

the quality of the relationship between the supervisor and the employee is highly important, the first day gives a good opportunity to commence building the rapport (Fowler, 1996 and Skeats, 1991).

Furthermore, discussing the induction plan with the supervisor on the first day could be a favourable start for efficient induction. An induction plan builds the frame, timetable and division of supervisor tasks for the induction (Kjelin & Kuusisto, 2003; 198). Having an induction plan helps the inductee to understand what there is to learn, but also helps the supervisor to follow the process and make sure that all the most important topics are covered, so that every newcomer receives certain information equally. In addition, the induction plan can be used as a platform to take the newcomer's own experience into consideration by modifying the plan to newcomer's individual needs. However, care should be taken not to include an overly comprehensive check-list of things to be covered on the first day, to avoid an overload of information (Fowler, 1996; 30).

3.5.1 Organisational culture

Schein explains that organisational culture consists of three levels: artefacts, espoused values and shared tacit assumptions. This means that the company culture is composed of organisational structures and processes, strategies and philosophies as well as the basic underlying assumptions such as perceptions, feelings and the unconscious beliefs that are taken for granted by the organisational members. Knowing the organisation's culture is important as the cultural elements determine the organisation's strategy, goals and modes of operating (1999; 14).

The company culture relates closely to induction, as it is important that the new employees will quickly obtain an understanding of the culture and thus commence to work towards the company's goals, simultaneously pursuing the shared values. However, it should be taken into account that this may not be a smooth process and that the organisational culture can be a cause of an induction crisis (Tyson & York, 2000). If the newcomer does not accept the company's values and does not want to change his or her behaviour to suit the company's modes of operating, the newcomer may prefer to leave the company (Schein, 1999; 129). Thus the induction should be able to demonstrate the positives of the company's culture and help the newcomer to adapt to this culture. Yet, it might be possible that newcomer will not start to appreciate the company's culture even

if the induction is well-managed. This emphasises the importance of using induction to promote the company culture, as it helps the management to prune those newcomers who do not fit to the organisation already during the trial period. However, if a realistic picture of the organisation has been conveyed during the recruitment phase and the recruits have been selected to fit to the organisational culture, a situation where the newcomer does not accept the company culture is unlikely to occur.

In addition, Zachary (2005; 220) mentions that "without sensitivity to context … education and training could be perceived as irrelevant or even useless in a specific organisation". Obviously, in the case of induction, it would be impossible to wait until the employee has understood the company's cultural context before starting to train him or her, as the induction training needs to be started immediately on the first day to gain the desired results, such as efficiency. Therefore Zachary manages to create a paradox with his statement, from which it is possible to derive that training on the first days would be useless, when it is widely taught that the first-day training and orientation is crucial. However, it cannot be argued against the notion that with sensitivity to context, such as company culture, the training achieves better results. Thus it is important to start the induction process with familiarising the newcomer with the company's culture.

3.5.2 Social integration

Presenting a new member to a team can be challenging. As Tyson and York (2000) state, the newcomers can be seen as threats to groups, which can partly ensue for example from the existing group members' fear of the newcomers either outperforming the other members or not contributing enough. Therefore a well-managed induction process should facilitate group integration. Like Lave and Wenger claim, the new employees learn as an outcome of interaction between the existing employees and the newcomers (cited in Filstad, 2004; 398). Thus the newcomer should be encouraged to actively participate in social practice and the existing employees should reciprocally be encouraged to accommodate the newcomer to the group. Moreover, as the whole work environment has an impact on the learning and socialisation of the newcomer, it is important to connect the colleagues to the induction process. A good way to start is to inform the established employees about the newcomer and openly discuss about the newcomer's

role with the established employees already before the newcomer arrives (Kupias & Peltola, 2009; 76).

Furthermore, the organisational development methods usually aim to develop the group functionality (Juuti, 1999; 277) - this also proves that groups and team working are the keys for organisational development. Furthermore, research done by Hartenian shows that most often when managers invest money into training, they prefer to invest into training in conflict resolution skills (2003; 27), which could derive from the fact that it is difficult for the managers to control and handle the interplay of intragroup relationships in the company (Schein, 1994; 141-181). Still it is important that the managers are aware of the behaviour of individuals and groups within their organisation (Tyson and York, 2000; 144). If the managers are able to recognise certain social behaviour in their own department, they might be able to adapt the induction of the newcomer so that the social adaptation does not create conflict and interpersonal difficulties are avoided. Nonetheless, instead of avoiding interpersonal collisions, it would be preferable that, rather than solely concentrating on the planning of the induction, the company could also think about how to prepare the established employees to receive the newcomers.

3.5.3 Psychological contract

Rousseau (1990) points out that relationships play a very important role in business and employee relations. What influences the employee-employer relationship greatly is the psychological contract – "individual's beliefs regarding reciprocal obligations" (1990; 390). The basis for induction is already created before the new employee joins the organisation (Kjelin & Kuusisto, 2003; 125) and the psychological contract as well starts to emerge in the recruiting phase. Consequently, problems during the induction phase are quite commonly caused by these psychological contracts (Tyson and York, 2000; 141), which "emerge when one party believes that a promise of future return has been made (e.g. pay for performance), a contribution has been given (e.g. some form of exchange) and thus, an obligation has been created to provide future benefits" (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; 246). In other words, psychological contract is, in contrary to a written contract, a more implicit understanding of expectations that the employer and employee have of each other and for their work relationship (Gabriel, 2008; 240).

The psychological contract should however be distinguished from normal future expectations. A recently employed manager may expect a high salary or a promotion, but these expectations might have originated from past experience or observations, whereas the psychological contract involves the employee believing he or she is entitled to receive or should receive something resulting from the employee perceiving a conveyed promise from the employer (Robinson 1996; 575). The expectations not related to psychological contracts can also be identified to be causing disappointment when not matching with the experiences, whereas by contrast the psychological contract violation can produce feelings of betrayal which go far beyond mere dissatisfaction (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; 247). To avoid the emergence of a false psychological contract, the managers as well as the subordinates need to pay attention to conveying realistic messages.

As an example, problems in the relationship with the employer and the new recruit caused by the psychological contract can emerge when the employer oversells the job or the company. This overselling might happen already during the recruiting process by presenting the company in a false manner or equally during the induction process for example by exaggerating the future prospects for the role. This situation could nonetheless be managed with realistic job preview, which prevents the newcomers' expectations building up to unrealistic measures, by giving the newcomers a truthful picture of the organisational reality (Popovich & Wanous, 1982).

3.5.4 Individual differences

Many authors agree that the socialisation process is a personal experience in that the personal characteristics affect how long it takes for the individual to integrate and adopt the organisational values and norms. The differences and attribution processes of the individual play such a remarkable role in socialisation that the companies should take this into consideration when moderating the new employees' adjustment to the organisation (Antonacopoulou & Güttel, 2010; 33). Furthermore, Filstad (2004; 397) remarks that the outcomes of organisational socialisation are influenced by the newcomers' expectations, experience and self-efficacy.

Also Ostroff and Kozlowski put emphasis on the individuals' differences during the socialisation process, when talking about the newcomers' proactiveness in information seeking (1992; 850). As the newcomers use their own initiative to find information, their

individual traits, such as outgoing nature for example, can affect how much information they manage to gather. In this case the individual differences could be diminished by providing all necessary information in the beginning of the employment and facilitating the information search by providing easy access to the information sources. However, this does not remove the differences in individuals' pace of learning, though it can speed up the information acquisition of the more introvert individuals. Furthermore, Kjelin and Kuusisto (2004; 132) claim that even if the individual takes the initiative and is active when it comes to information seeking, the supervisor should not take an inactive role in the induction; on the contrary, the supervisor should take an active role as well.

If the active newcomer is left on his or her own, he or she will most likely be able to gather all the information needed, but simultaneously feel that he or she has been left without support from the organisation, which again can cause feelings of frustration leading to dissatisfaction. This again proves that socialisation is not furthered only through correct and sufficient information, but also the source and the way in which the information is provided plays an important role, as was already noted in the previous section when discussing the Reichers' rate of socialisation.

In addition it should be taken into account that all the information that the newcomer needs to speed up the socialisation process does not always come from tangible sources. When it comes to intangible sources, the company or the supervisor is not able to provide this for the newcomer. These more intangible sources can be for example the observing of the colleagues' attitudes or experimenting the new style of behaviour (Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992; 851). Seeking information from these intangible sources can again occur at different levels and rates, depending on the individual. Even if the managers tried to affect how the newcomer learns the organisational norms and values, they will not be able to totally manage how the newcomer is influenced by the established company members. This furthermore emphasises that an effective induction process should not only concentrate on the training of the inductee, but also on preparing the established employees to receive the newcomers with a manner that supports the induction process.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of the research was to discover issues and possible problems in the current employee induction within the Skanska NPU from the new employees' viewpoint. The researcher also tried to probe how the employees at this specific unit would prefer to receive the induction. The research was also designed in a way that it allows possibilities for further study inside the organisation around the topic of induction and in addition to be of help when planning an effective induction programme for the NPU in the future.

The study has therefore been addressing the following questions:

➤ What are the issues hindering efficient induction?

➤ Are there any problems within the induction process at Skanska NPU?

➤ What are the issues and problems that Skanska NPU is facing in their newcomer induction?

4.2 RESEARCH METHOD

This research could be described to be a case study, as it concentrates on one particular unit in an organisation. Case study means generating detailed and intensive knowledge about a single case, which in this research refers to induction within the Skanska NPU. Case study may include for example questionnaires, interviews and observation (Saunders et al., 2000). In this case the primary research data was collected using a questionnaire, which is a good method to obtain a large amount of rather specific data that is both quantitative and qualitative (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009; 191).

Initially the researcher considered using interviews as a primary research method, but decided to choose a questionnaire to be able to get a wider perspective, as the questionnaire allows the researcher to choose a larger sample, thus providing results that can be generalised with less concern for the validity of the generalisation. In addition, as the company environment is rather hectic, the interviews would have been extremely time consuming for both the researcher and the interviewees. Moreover, the interviews

could have posed a threat to the ethicality of the research, as the anonymity is more difficult to ensure during interviews. Lack of anonymity could again have resulted in more cautious replies, thus generating less negative opinions, which again are crucial when creating useful recommendations for future action.

4.2.1 Questionnaire Design

The design of the questionnaire can affect the response rates, as well as the quality and reliability of the data (Saunders, 2000; 279), therefore plenty of time was scheduled for the designing of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was built using a software called Digium, which is a browser-based survey tool used at Skanska. A link to the online questionnaire was sent to the selected employees by e-mail and the sampling frame was accessible through Skanska's HR department. There are several advantages in administrating a questionnaire that is accessible online compared to a paper questionnaire. An online system enables quick distribution of the questionnaire to a large number of participants and allows the researcher to track the amount of replies. It also strengthens the anonymity of the participants, as the researcher does not have to collect the completed questionnaires in person. Moreover there is less chance of the researcher misinterpreting the answers as they are not handwritten.

The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions to be able to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire was also divided into sections in compliance with the topic areas.

Open-ended questions are vital when the researcher is looking for fresh ideas or novel perspectives (Fisher, 2004; 167) and it also gives the respondents a possibility to elaborate and explain their answers. In this questionnaire, two open-ended questions were placed right in the beginning of the questionnaire to enhance the possibility of finding new ideas. Placing the questions like this prevents the likelihood of the respondent taking ideas from the other questions and answer options given by the questionnaire designer, in this case the researcher. Moreover, open-ended questions were placed in the end of every section to allow the respondent to present ideas that the closed questions may have brought to his or her mind. This type of design also allows

elaborating and explaining the ideas around that specific topic area at hand. On the contrary, an advantage of the closed-ended questions is that they take less time to answer. In addition they are more easily analysed as the coding and categorising is easier and they provide similar answers that are easy to compare with each other (Saunders, 2000). In this study the closed-ended questions were vital for gaining a large amount of specific data without taking too much of the respondents' time.

As the questionnaire was sent out to employees in different organisational levels and countries, a pilot testing was conducted using people of different cultural backgrounds and professional levels to discover possible weaknesses in the questionnaire design. The pilot testing also enabled the researcher to test that the wording of the questions was simple and clear. Well-thought wording ensures better accuracy - meaning that the respondents' answers express correctly what the question was meant to measure (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009; 84).

4.2.2 Sample
Purposive sampling was used to choose the sample for this study. Purposive sampling refers to a method where the researcher selects - on his or her own judgement - those cases which will best support finding the answers for the research questions and meeting the research objectives (Saunders et al., 2000; 174). In this case, the entire staff of Skanska NPU could have been considered as a sample, as they should all have gone through an induction of some sort when joining the company. However, the questionnaire was administered to 53 particularly selected employees in the NPU, who were chosen because they had joined Skanska within one year; therefore they were most likely to remember the induction process better than the more established employees, thus providing more accurate and current information.

4.2.3 Data Analysis
The analysis of the quantitative data was conducted with Digium by creating charts and tables. In this research, most of the data was presented as frequency distributions of single variable in the form of bar charts, and the Likert scales replies were analysed by creating figures that depict the frequency distribution of degree of agreement.

Furthermore, Digium enabled the researcher to make causal comparisons with two variables, which was used to strengthen the importance of some of the findings. The causal comparisons were done by comparing whether an answer 'yes' or 'no' to certain questions, had impact on the respondents opinion about the induction in general.

The analysing of the qualitative data was conducted by looking for connections within all open-ended question replies and creating several categories, by listing the words and terms that were used most often by the respondents. This helps the researcher to find out what are the parts within induction that the newcomers themselves put most emphasis on. In addition, the qualitative data was used to strengthen and/or further elaborate the quantitative data.

4.2.4 Limitations

One recognised limitation to the study method is the language of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted in English; however, it was administered within a Nordic unit. In this unite the majority of respondents do not have English as their mother tongue. This could have caused problems with the accuracy of the data, as some of the participants may not have been able to understand all the questions correctly. In addition, it should be taken into account that open questions are often left unanswered because they acquire more effort from the respondent (Saunders *et al.*, 2000). In the case of a possible language barrier, it is likely that even more open questions are skipped over, as the level of English may hinder the respondent to write complex ideas. However, regardless of this limitation, it was clear that the questionnaire should be done in English, as this is the working language of the Nordic unit and because translating the questionnaire to three languages could have generated additional costs.

4.3 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical issues may arise during the design, initial access, data collection, data analysis and reporting stage (Saunders *et* al., 2000) In other words; ethical issues are to be taken into consideration during the whole research process, from the beginning to the end.

Especially during the initial access and data collection stage, it is crucial to make sure that the participants are participating in the research on their own consent and their answers

are recorded anonymously (Fisher, 2004). In this research, albeit the researcher had access to the names of the participants to whom the link to the questionnaire was sent, the questionnaire itself was replied to anonymously and the researcher had no possibility to link the respondent to a certain reply, or to track down who had already replied to the questionnaire and who had not. Another ethical advantage of an anonymous online questionnaire is that it is clear that the respondents are participating on their own consent as they need to deliberately click a link to start filling in the survey. The respondents are also able to quit the process at any point, without the researcher knowing.

Furthermore, like Saunders (2000) points out, when collecting primary data - especially qualitative data - within an organisation, it may be possible for the researcher to identify certain participants from their answers. As the sample in this case was rather small, only three simple demographical questions were included in the questionnaire, since more specific sorting of the respondents could have enabled the researcher to identify some of the participants. The participants were also clearly informed for which purposes the results of the questionnaire will be used and that the replies will be handled confidentially. As for the data that was automatically stored by the Digium online tool, the confidentiality was handled by allowing access with a password only for the researcher plus a specified number of members of the NPU organisation.

When reporting the data, the researcher should avoid bias and selectivity and consider the issues involved when reporting findings when the research is sponsored by the actual research target organisation (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009; 98). In this study, the researcher was not employed by the researched organisation before or during the research phase. However, the research was conducted at the organisation's premises, thus the researcher got to know the organisation and had continuous interaction with the company representatives. Because of this situation, the researcher had to pay close attention to diminish any possible bias.

5. FINDINGS

This chapter presents the main findings obtained from the research, by introducing the results from the questionnaire that was distributed to a selected group of newly recruited Skanska NPU employees. Of the 53 people who received the questionnaire, 43 responded, resulting in a response rate of 81%.

The demographic questions reveal that almost half of the respondents were from Sweden, 32% were from Norway and the smallest number of respondents was working in Finland. Furthermore, most of the respondents had already been working for Skanska more than 6 months, 35% had started within past 2-6 months and 23% had been Skanska employees only less than 2 months.
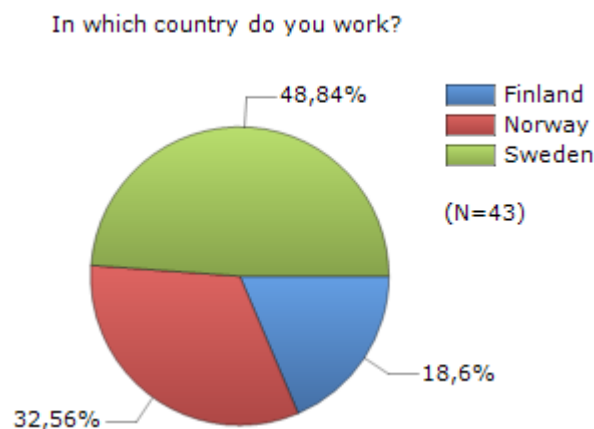
Figure 1. Demographics

5.1 PRACTICALITIES AND INITIAL ENTRY

In the beginning of the questionnaire the employees were asked if they received an induction when they started at Skanska. To make sure that the respondents understand the meaning of induction in the same way, it was explained that induction in this context refers to the actions taken to help the new employee get started in his or her new job and to adapt to his or her new working environment. Figure 2. summarises that of the respondents, 81% said that they had an induction, whereas 12% claimed not to have received any induction and the remaining 7% were not sure. The qualitative data from the

open-ended questions also show that 4 respondents furthermore explained that there either was no induction or that it was very unclear.
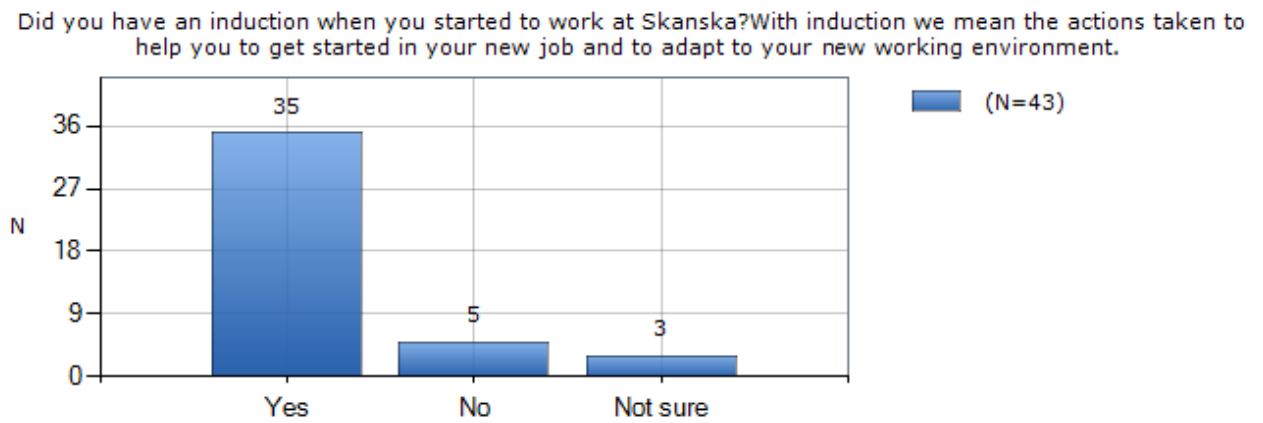
Did you have an induction when you started to work at Skanska?With induction we mean the actions taken to help you to get started in your new job and to adapt to your new working environment.

Figure 2. Provision of induction

The immediate superior was present on the first day for 67% of the new employees. When the opinion about the induction in general is compared between those who met their supervisor on the first day and those who did not meet their supervisor on the first day, the Figure 3. shows that those whose supervisor was present were more satisfied with the induction in general.

On a scale 1-5, how well do you think the induction at Skanska NPU was conducted in general?
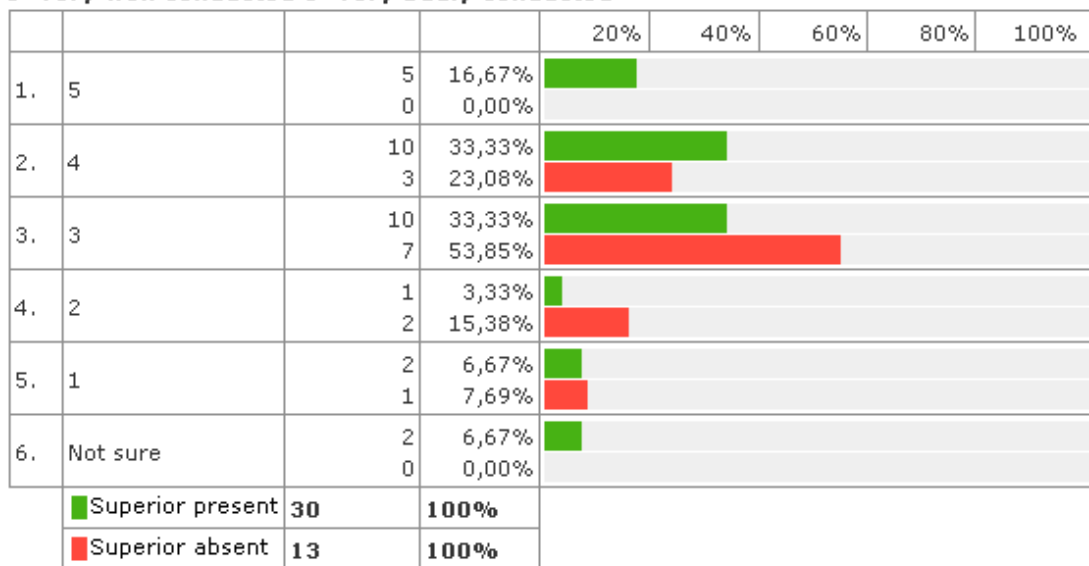5=Very well conducted 1=Very badly conducted

				20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1.	5	5	16,67%					
		0	0,00%					
2.	4	10	33,33%					
		3	23,08%					
3.	3	10	33,33%					
		7	53,85%					
4.	2	1	3,33%					
		2	15,38%					
5.	1	2	6,67%					
		1	7,69%					
6.	Not sure	2	6,67%					
		0	0,00%					

■ Superior present	30	100%
■ Superior absent	13	100%

Figure 3. The effect of supervisor absence

Did your induction follow the induction plan?Induction plan can for example be a check-list of things that the supervisor should go through with the new employee.
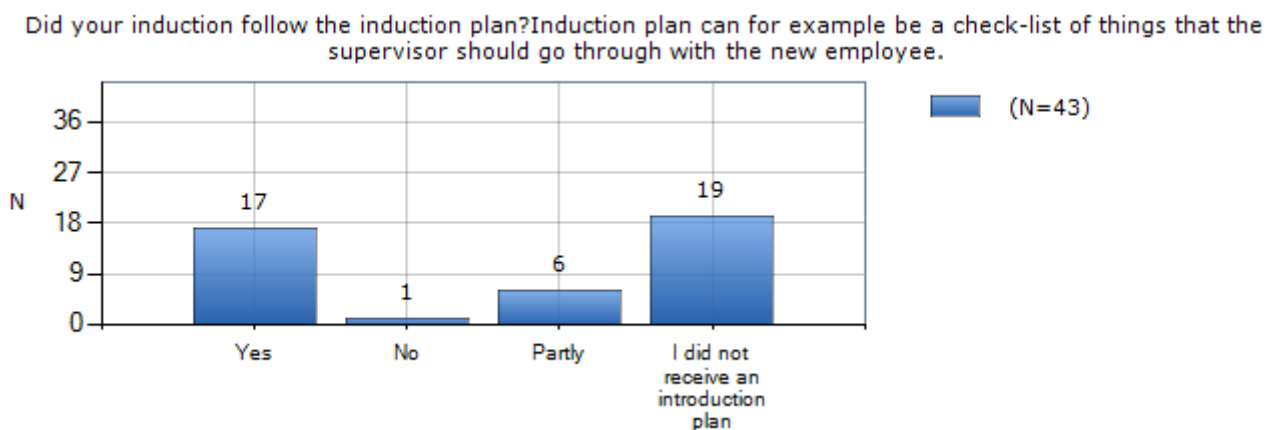
Figure 4. Induction plan

Figure 4. illustrates that 44% of the respondents did not receive an induction plan. Furthermore, the results showed that of those who did receive an induction plan, the majority (88%) thought that it was necessary and the same majority also agreed that it covered the most important topics. 79% of those who did not receive an induction plan would have wanted to receive one.

In addition, when the participants were asked what they thought to have been good in the induction, two respondents especially mentioned the induction plan and conversely when they were asked about the negatives three respondents wanted to especially point out that the induction would have been better if there was a plan or a check-list.

5.2 ORIENTATION TO ROLE

Issues regarding the orientation to role and socialisation were measured using a twelve-item Likert-type scale (see Appendix 1). Scale anchors ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questions were formed so that the answers would be able to tell how the induction took care of the orientation to the exact role that the newcomer was hired for; starting from the picture the newcomer was presented of the role to the actual teaching of the tasks. In addition, using the information gained from the literature review, some of the questions are also able to reveal something about the socialisation of the newcomer.

The results shown on Appendix 1 reveal that the most positive reply when compared to all the questions on the twelve-item scale was the respondent understanding how his or her role could contribute towards Skanska's values and aims. 65% of the respondents agreed with this statement, and 30% agreed strongly. Furthermore, this statement also received the least disagree-replies (10%) and nobody was unsure how they felt about this statement.

The second most positive result was reached on the statement that probed whether the newcomer felt more committed to his or her new role at Skanska after the induction. 50 % agreed with the statement. However, 10% were not sure how to answer this question.

The overall score of all the statements was 3.32, therefore the general opinion on the orientation to role being rather neutral, yet on the positive side.

5.3 MENTOR

Figure 5. reveals that 63% of the new employees had a mentor, 30% did not have a mentor and 7% were not sure if they were assigned a mentor during the induction process.
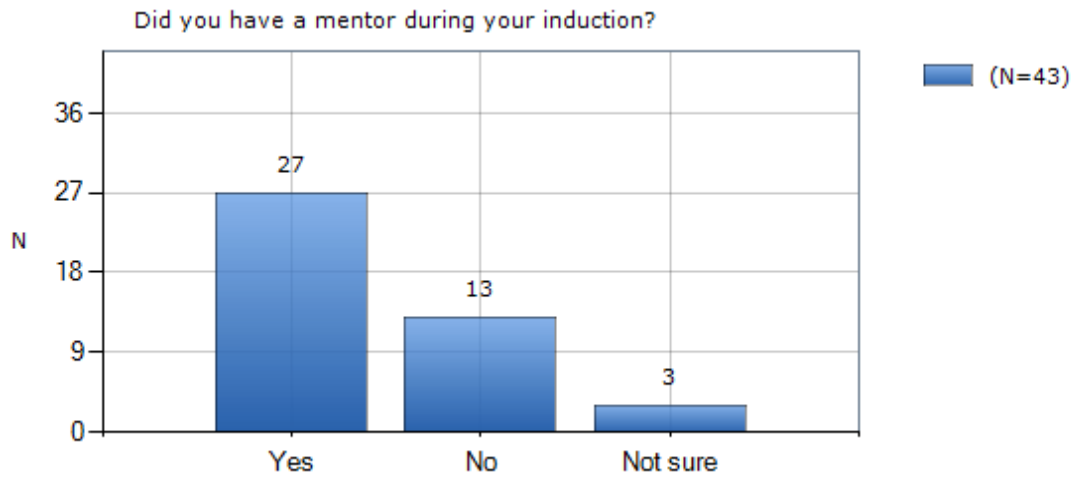

Figure 5. Mentor

Figure 6. shows that 85% of the new employees think that a mentor would be useful or very useful during the induction phase; only 5% of the respondents think that having a mentor would be useless or very useless.
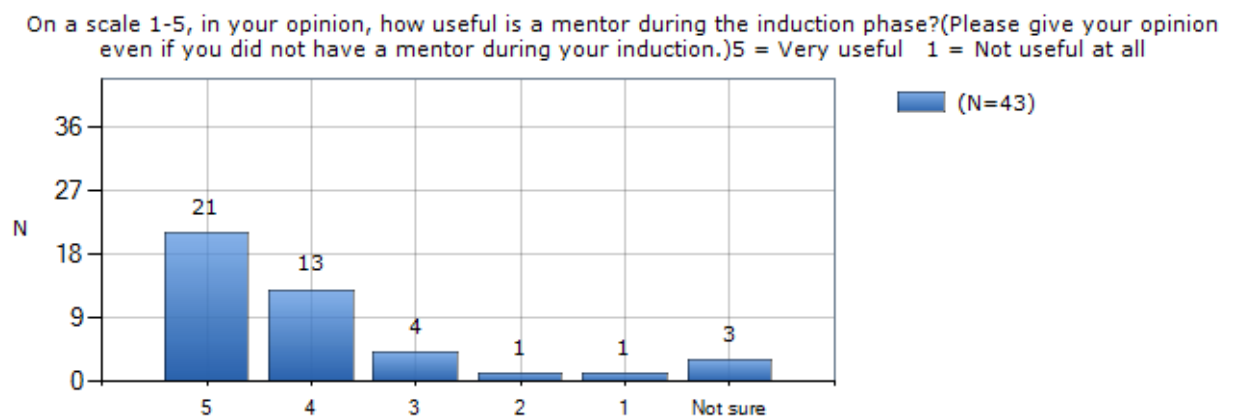

Figure 6. Mentor usefulness

On a scale 1-5, how well do you think the induction at Skanska NPU was conducted in general?
5=Very well conducted 1=Very badly conducted

				20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1.	5	5	18,52%					
		0	0,00%					
2.	4	11	40,74%					
		2	15,38%					
3.	3	10	37,04%					
		4	30,77%					
4.	2	0	0,00%					
		3	23,08%					
5.	1	0	0,00%					
		3	23,08%					
6.	Not sure	1	3,70%					
		1	7,69%					
🟩 Had a mentor	27	100%						
🟥 No mentor	13	100%						
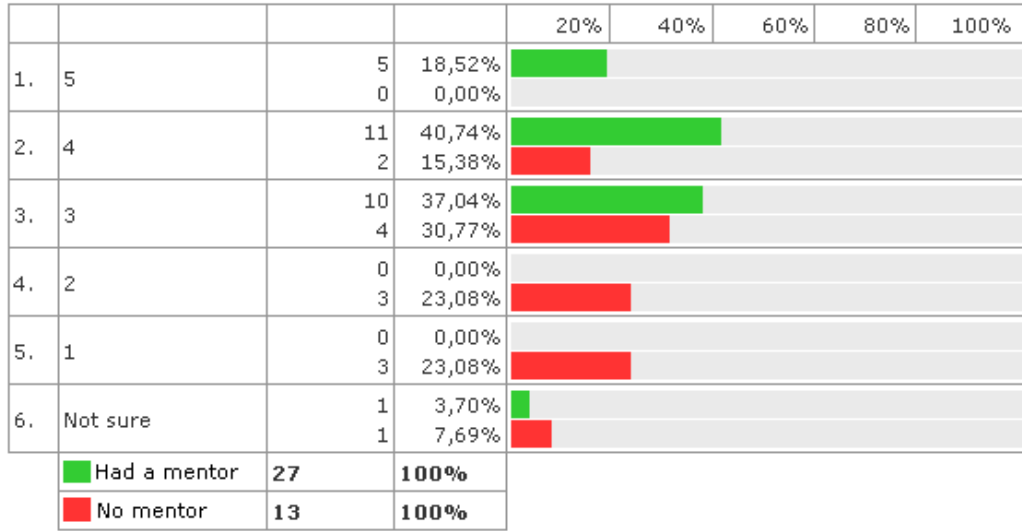
Figure 7. The effect of having a mentor

Furthermore, Figure 7. depicts how the overall opinion on the induction differed between the respondents who had a mentor and the respondents who did not have a mentor.

5.4 SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

The following figures depict the respondents opinions on the social experience during the induction.
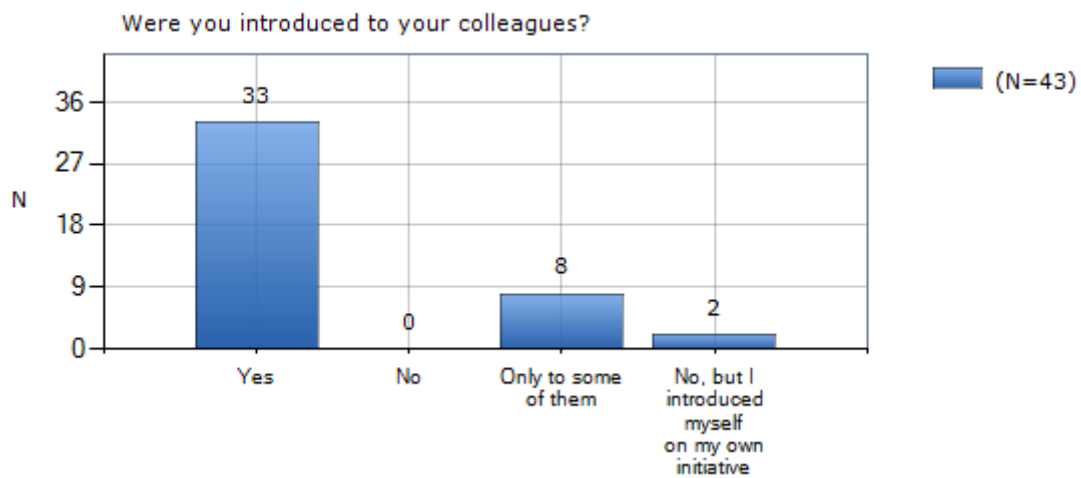
Figure 8. Introduction to colleagues
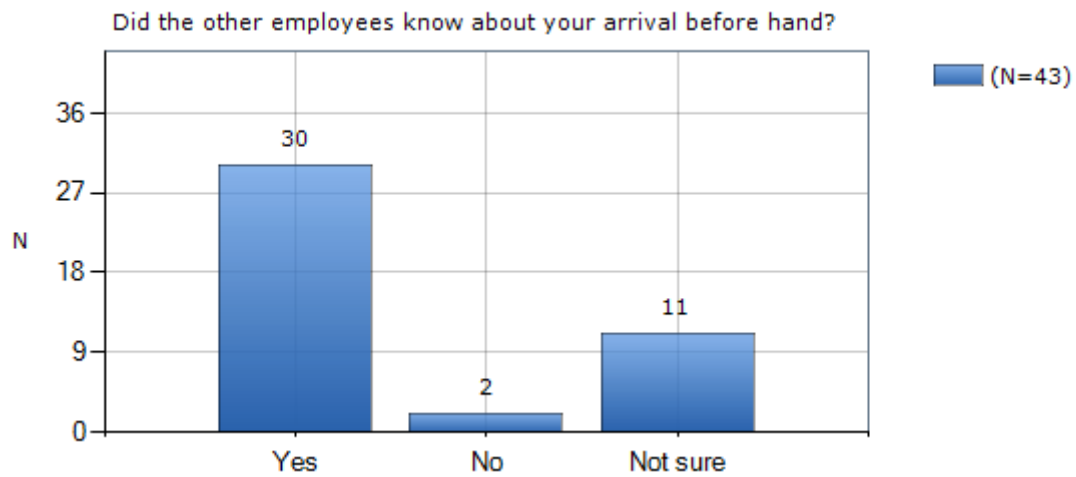
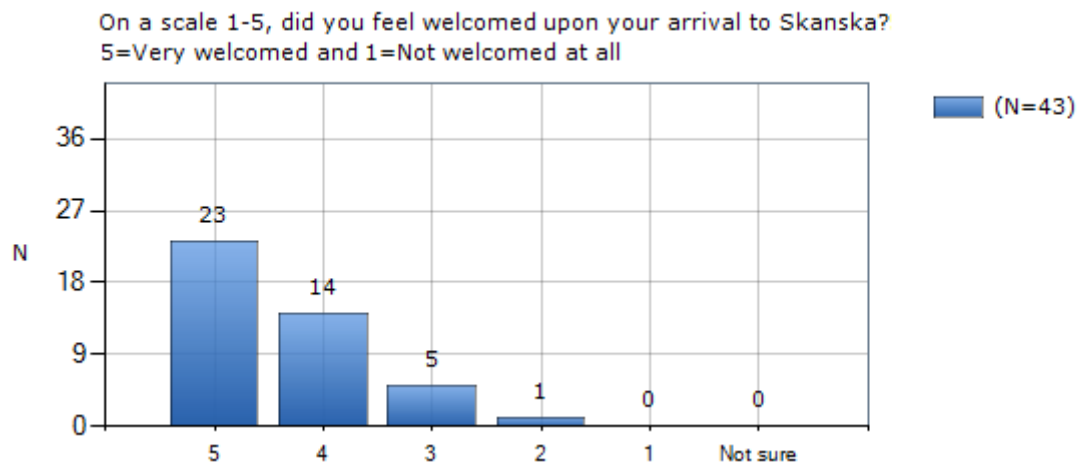Figure 9. Colleagues expecting the newcomer
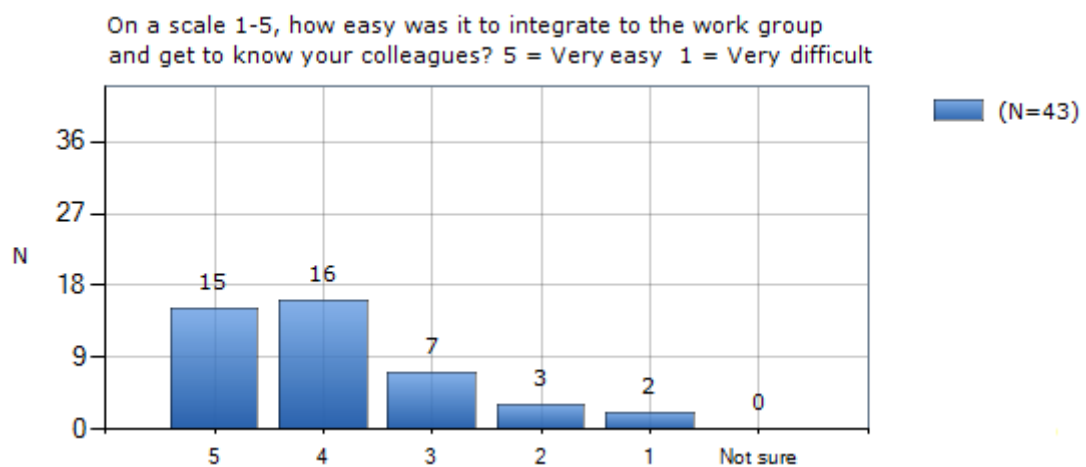

Figure 10. Newcomer feeling welcomed

Figure 11. Social integration

The Figure 11. summarises the results when the newcomers were asked to rate on a scale from 5 (very easy) to 1 (very difficult), how easy it was to integrate into the work group and to get to know their colleagues. The result was 3.9, thus still on the positive side, but more dispersion within the respondents was detected here than when asking about the feeling of being welcomed. Moreover, 2 respondents felt that the integration into the work group was very difficult.

When researching the social experience during the organisational entry, the newcomers were given a possibility to give suggestions on how the social experience could be improved by using an open-ended question. Only five newcomers took the opportunity to give their suggestions. Three out of the five respondents pointed out that a mentor can be of great help when socially integrating into the new work environment. Furthermore two out of five suggested that the mentor or the colleagues should make sure that the newcomer is invited for lunch and/or coffee. Two out of five respondents also took up the difficulty that occurs because the members of the NPU are located in different offices.

In the beginning of the questionnaire the newcomers were asked their opinion about what was good in the induction and 31 newcomers gave their opinion by replying to this open-ended question. 42% mentioned something about the colleagues. Some of the respondents for example thought it was nice that they were introduced to people and that their colleagues helped them during the induction period. When asked what could have been improved in the induction, out of the 28 respondents, 18% mentioned something about colleagues and people. For example a suggestion to involve more leaders and colleagues in the induction was given, as well as a proposal to organise get-togethers for the new people.

5.5 OVERALL EXPERIENCE

The Figure 12. shows that the overall score that the respondents gave for the induction at Skanska NPU was 3.3, on the positive side of neutral. The majority (41%) of the respondents thought that the induction was neither well nor badly conducted.
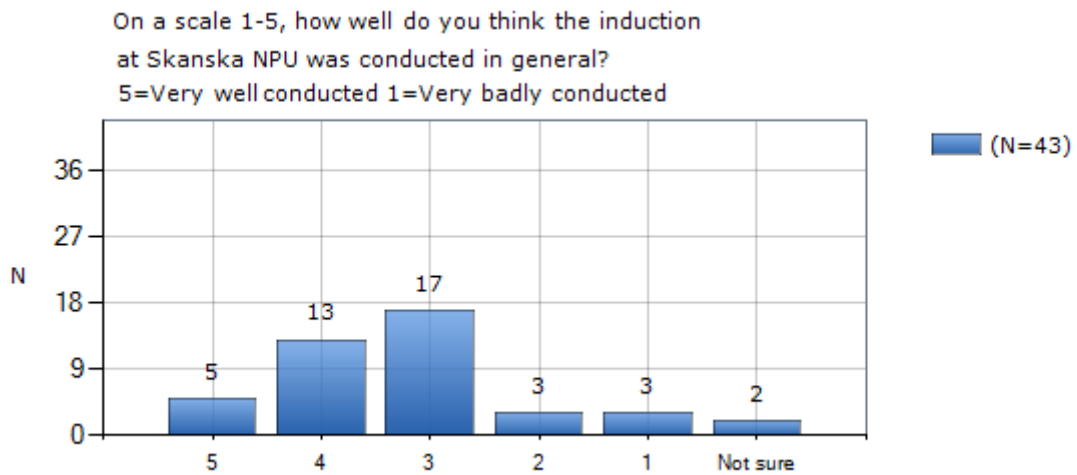
Figure 12. Overall experience

In the end of the questionnaire, the newcomers were asked whether they see themselves working for Skanska in the future. Figure 13. depicts that a clear majority replied yes, while a few were not sure and one replied negatively. One respondent skipped this particular question.
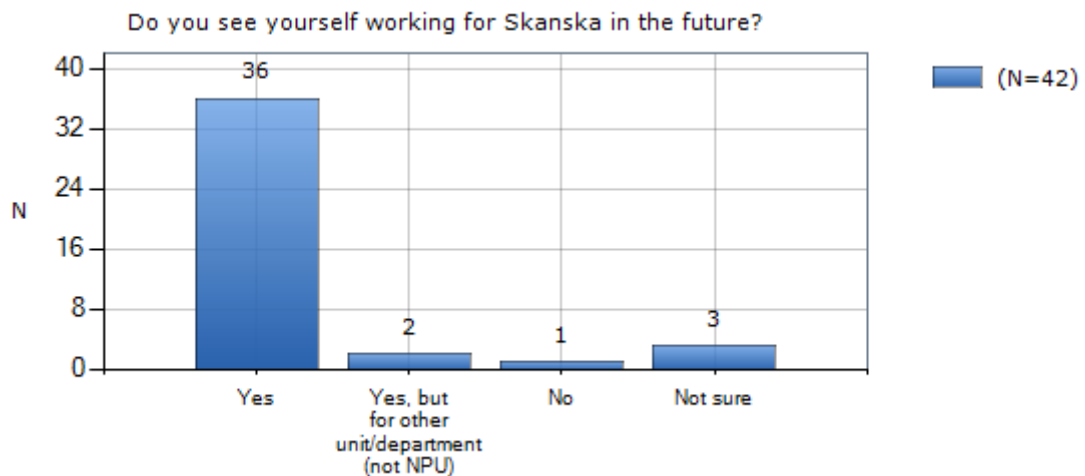

Figure 13. Future at Skanska

6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 PRACTICALITIES AND INITIAL ENTRY

Skanska aims to provide induction to all new employees upon their arrival to the company and it is usually the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the recruit is given a sufficient induction. Therefore it is rather surprising that the findings show that 5 recruits claim that they have not received an induction at all and 3 recruits are not sure if they can say to have had an induction. It is however possible that even though the term induction was shortly presented within the question, the respondents may still have different conceptions of the term, thus resulting in a negative answer if the respondents conception does not match the actions taken by his or her supervisor. Still, this result is rather alarming, as it can indicate that the supervisors have not been given clear guidelines on who is responsible for the induction and they are not aware of the general rules from the Skanska Group level regarding the induction practices and the formal induction day course provided to all new employees by Skanska on a national level. The amount of employees who never received an induction proves that the improvement of the induction process at the NPU should already start from the basics.

Several authors pointed out that the presence of the immediate supervisor on the newcomer's first day is crucial to be able to set a good start for the supervisor's and the employee's future. The findings show that at NPU, a third of the newcomers did not see their supervisor on their first day. This is not a surprising result in this particular case, as the NPU is a unit that consists of Finland, Sweden and Norway, thus the employees are also scattered within these three countries. Because the operations within the unit are not confined to one country either, it means that the supervisors and their subordinates might be working in different countries. This again can be a problem that affects the induction process at the Skanska NPU. When the general opinion about the induction of those whose supervisor was present on the first day was compared with the general opinion of those whose supervisor was not present, the result showed that those newcomers whose supervisors received them on the first day, were also overall more satisfied with their induction. Therefore it seems that the newcomers agree with the authors about the importance of supervisor presence. Furthermore, from this it could be

derived that the absence of supervisors causes problems in providing effective induction at the NPU.

The findings also show that almost half of the respondents did not receive an induction plan. This can be seen to hinder efficient induction, as Kjelin & Kuusisto claim that an induction plan is a good way to follow the newcomer's progress and ensure that the supervisor remembers to cover all topics during the induction phase. Furthermore, the findings show that the newcomers themselves think that an induction plan is necessary. As many of the newcomers did not receive an induction plan and as they also think themselves that having a plan is useful, not having one can be one of the problems impeding the induction at NPU.

6.2 ORIENTATION TO ROLE

The orientation to the actual role of the newcomer is essential, because when the tasks and expectations are clearly presented for the newcomer, he or she is more quickly able to start working efficiently. The results from the Likert-scale show that there is quite a lot of dispersion within the respondents, and all the items received agreement as well as disagreement. However, as the overall score shows, it could not be said that the orientation to the role has been perfectly managed within the organisation as none of the statements received remarkably high scores. In the case of well implemented induction, all the new employees should have received a clear picture of their new role and the expectations for this role, as well as good practical orientation on how to conduct the actual work (Compton *et al.,*2009, Dessler, 2009 and Tyson & York, 2000) and in the case of the NPU only some of the newcomers felt that these issues were taken care of.

The statement that the employee understands how to work toward Skanska's values and goals received most agreement, which is a positive thing as it can simultaneously mean that the respondents understand what these goals and values are, which again Dessler among others sees as an important part of the socialisation of the employee. However, knowing how to work towards the goal does not automatically mean that the employee is yet able to work efficiently towards these goals in practice. Still, it should me remembered that, especially in the beginning, the aim of induction is to give the inductee

a good basis for his or her future within the company and from the socialisation's point of view it is important that the new employee understand how the practical tasks and work is linked with the organisation's goals and values.

The findings from the statement number 5 "The picture I got about the role matched the tasks in real life" show that psychological contract may have been an issue in some entry cases. However, with this questionnaire that is not concentrating solely on issues regarding psychological contract, it is impossible to say to what extent this could be causing problems during the induction phase. Still it suggests that the recruiters cannot ignore the possible confusion between the advertised role and the actual role in practice.

6.3 MENTOR

Mentoring is claimed to be an efficient induction method by several authors. This is why it has received considerable attention in this study as well. 63 percent of the newcomers having a mentor would suggest that several supervisors at the NPU have embraced the importance of mentoring as a method, but maybe it is not yet taken as a method throughout the whole organisation. Nonetheless, like Von Bergen *et al.* (2001) note, an important thing to be taken into account when it comes to mentoring is that the person who is assigned to be a mentor needs to be picked carefully to be able to provide the best possible mentoring for the newcomer. In addition the mentor needs to be taking part voluntarily. Not having enough suitable mentor volunteers available might partly be the reason that not all the newcomers had a mentor during the induction at the Skanska NPU. As Kjelin and Kuusisto mentioned, a mentor who has a negative attitude toward his or her own job and is thus not able to convey a positive image of the company and the organisational culture can be harmful for the newcomer's socialisation. Therefore some of the newcomers at NPU not having a mentor can be seen positively, if the lack of a mentor is due to the supervisor not wanting to assign a mentor who would be unsuitable for the task. This being the reason would suggest that the supervisors at the NPU have considered all aspects within the mentoring issue and thus it would be precipitate to claim that the topic of mentoring is a source for poorly managed induction process within the NPU.

Conversely, the findings show that as two thirds of the newcomers have mentors, mentoring is already recognised to be a good induction method within Skanska. Now the goal for the NPU could be to promote the mentoring possibility within existing employees and put more effort on finding a suitable mentor for all the newcomers. However, it still needs to be considered that a full 100% implementation of mentoring may be impossible, as some of the NPU employees are situated in smaller offices, where there is not enough people to choose from to be mentors.

The research also reveals that the newcomers themselves agree with the statement that a mentor is useful during the induction phase. This again emphasises the importance of facilitating mentoring within the NPU as part of the induction process. Moreover, when comparing the opinions of those newcomers who had a mentor with those who did not have a mentor, the results show that those having a mentor were clearly more satisfied with the overall induction than those who were not provided with a mentor. This does not only prove that mentoring is a good induction method, but it also proves that when the NPU has assigned mentors, these mentors have performed their mentoring duties well. This again is a positive thing for the NPU, as it means that instead of introducing whole new guidelines on how the mentoring happens in practice, the company can just expand and promote further the practice that is already in use.

6.4 SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

As social contacts play a vital role in organisational integration, getting to know one's colleagues from the very beginning of organisational entry is important. Therefore it is positive to see that most of the newcomers felt welcomed upon their arrival. Furthermore, the newcomers felt that the established employees were aware of the newcomers' arrival, which Kupias & Peltola asserted to be an important starting point when accommodating interaction between the established and new employees. These results would depict that the NPU has a good basis for social integration.

Yet, when asked if the newcomers felt it to be easy to integrate and get to know the colleagues, the results were not that positive, which proves that Juuti , Tyson & York and Schein are correct about the complexity of group behaviour. It seems that it is not enough

that the newcomers feel welcomed; the managerial efforts of accommodating social integration should reach beyond the pre-entry actions and first day introductions.

6.5 OVERALL EXPERIENCE

The findings show that even though the overall opinion of the induction at the Skanska NPU is neutral, however leaning to the positive side, there was a lot of dispersion between the respondents' replies. All of the questions received very varied replies that indicates that there are several issues affecting the induction process at the NPU and that the employees have had differing experiences when it comes to induction. It was furthermore interesting to see that a clear majority of the respondents said that they see themselves working for Skanska in the future, though the amount of negative replies would imply that more newcomers should have been keen on leaving the organisation, as many authors claim the inefficient induction causing early employee turnover. The result might depict that poor induction is not actually such a significant reason for employee turnover as it is said to be. However, it needs to be noted that even though the questionnaire was answered anonymously, this question is rather sensitive and may have resulted in cautious replies.

7. CONCLUSIONS

New employee induction as a topic is very wide and some could argue that the scope is too large for a Bachelor's thesis; however, to be able to reach the research aims it was necessary not to concentrate on only a very specific area within induction, but instead research the induction as a whole. This approach allowed the researcher to detect what are the most important issues to be taken into account in employee induction and if these are the issues that affect the effectiveness of the induction process at the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit. Furthermore instead of concentrating to causal relationships, the goal of this study was to collect descriptive data that can help in narrating the current situation, which again helps in finding more possible problems that Skanska is facing, thus also creating a better basis for future actions.

The results of this study depict that there are several issues affecting the induction process at the Skanska NPU and that the employees have had very differing experiences when it comes to induction. The dispersion between the replies would hint that there are no common guidelines on newcomer induction and that it is most likely that the effective implementation of induction depends on the supervisor and on whether the supervisor has time and interest to take care of the induction of the newcomer.

However, it seems that as some newcomers were very satisfied with their induction, there are already good induction methods in use, yet, these methods are not widely presented and their implementation is not followed. Therefore, it could be recommended that common guidelines should be created and the good practices that are already in use should be presented to the whole NPU and the management should follow up that the common guidelines are executed within the entire unit. Furthermore, the research results show that especially mentoring should be embraced as an induction method and that the NPU should facilitate supervisors travelling to enable them to receive their new subordinates personally.

One recognised limitation of this study is that the research was based on data that was collected from employees of a single unit within an organisation. Therefore the findings of this study cannot be generalised, as similar results may not be found in other

organisational settings. To be able to determine whether the results are unique to this particular organisation and unit at hand or whether the results could extend to cover other organisations within the same industry or organisations in general, a replication of the study is necessary. Notwithstanding the fact that this case comprises a unit that is established within three different countries, the study should likewise be replicated in other countries, since the study examines such issues as socialisation and company culture that can vary largely in different cultural environments. These cultural characteristics could affect the issues that companies face with the employee induction process. Culturally wider research could also yield more valuable results, thus more useful recommendations for international companies that have more unified and concentrated processes.

As this research is focused on the employees' point of view, it does not actually measure if the induction has been effective in a way that it has decreased turnover and increased employee effectiveness and thereby create more future revenue. This however could be an interesting topic for further study, which could further reveal whether the amount of time invested in investigating effective induction is actually a good return on investment.

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APPENDIX 1 - ORIENTATION TO ROLE

On a scale 1-5, how well do these statements match the experience you had regarding the induction to your role and tasks?

1. My new role was clear and the management had planned the tasks before hand;
2. My new role and tasks were well explained;
3. I was taught how to manage my tasks in practice;
4. The expectations for my work were well explained;
5. The picture I got about the role (job advert and job interview) matched the tasks in real life;
6. I understood how my role and my work can contribute towards Skanska values and aims;
7. After the induction I felt more committed to my new role at Skanska;
8. I had little or no access to people who have previously performed my role in this organisation (Reverse scaling);
9. I would have wanted more orientation and more help with my new tasks (Reverse scaling);
10. My existing know-how and expertise was appreciated and taken into account during the induction;
11. I got a good understanding of the unwritten rules of how things are done;
12. The Nordic aspect and the Nordic interfaces regarding my role were well explained.
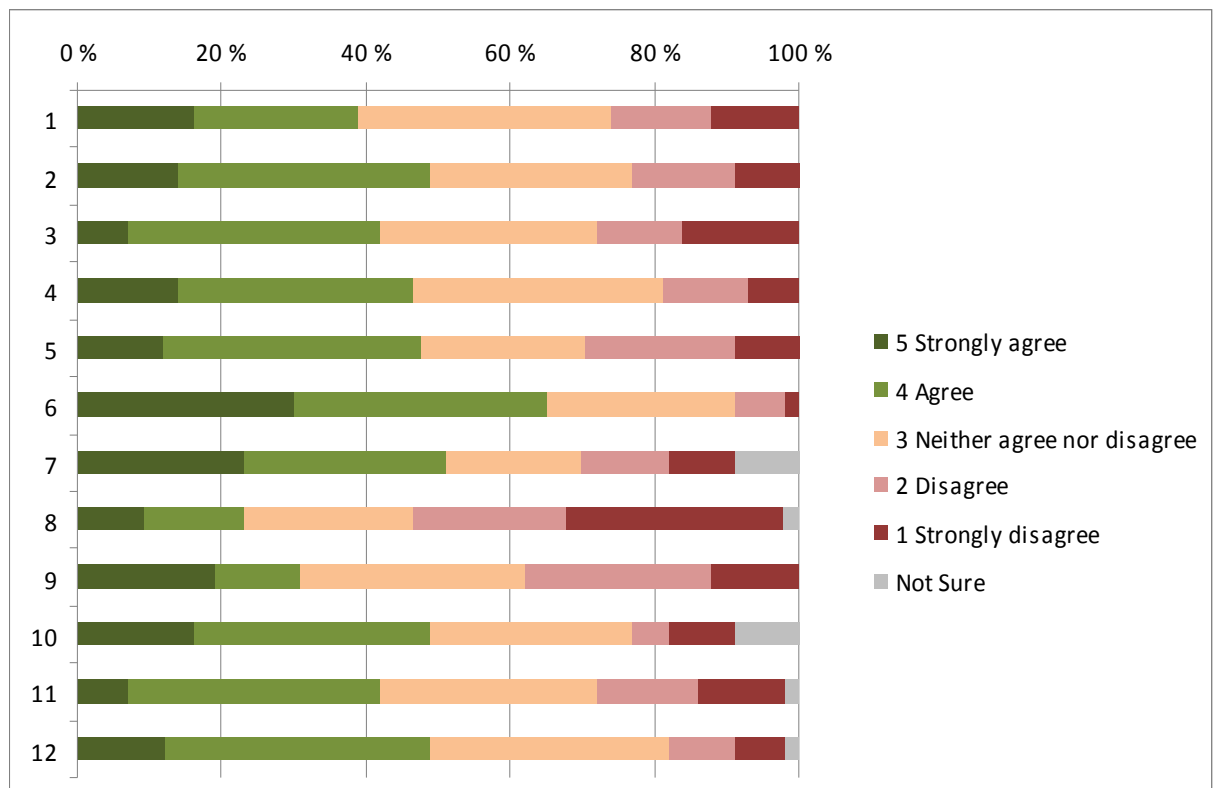
N = 43

APPENDIX 2 - QUESTIONNAIRE

The layout of the questionnaire was slightly different from this one when sent to the Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit employees, as the questionnaire was administered online. The online layout also enabled clear division of sections by topic.

New Employee Induction - Nordic Procurement Unit

Welcome to the survey!

This survey explores how satisfied the recently recruited Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit employees are with the induction that they receive when joining the Nordic Procurement Unit.

Induction means the actions taken to introduce the company and help the new employee to get a good start to his or her new job.
The purpose of induction is to ensure the effective integration of staff into the organisation.

The results of this survey will be used to identify possible problems in the new employee induction at the Nordic Procurement Unit and improve the induction process.

In addition, this survey is part of Annika Manninen's thesis for BA (Hons) Management course in the University of Lincoln. Your help is highly appreciated.

You will answer the questions anonymously and all answers will be treated confidentially.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, do not hesitate to contact
Annika Manninen annika.manninen@skanska.fi

In which country do you work?

( ) Finland
( ) Norway
( ) Sweden

Which function do you work for in the Nordic Procurement Unit?

( ) Project Support (PS)
( ) Framework Agreement (FA)
( ) Other

How long have you been working for Skanska Nordic Procurement Unit?

( ) less than 2 months
( ) 2 - 6 months
( ) more than 6 months

Did you have an induction when you started to work at Skanska?

With induction we mean the actions taken to help you to get started in your new job and to adapt to your new working environment.

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

What do you think was good in the Skanska NPU induction?
_____
_____
_____
_____

What in your opinion could have been done better in the Skanska NPU induction?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Did your induction follow the induction plan?
Induction plan can for example be a check-list of things that the supervisor should go through with the new employee.

( ) Yes
( ) No

( ) Partly
( ) I did not receive an introduction plan

If you had an induction plan, do you think it was necessary?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

Do you think the induction plan covered all the most important topics?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

How could the induction plan be improved?
_____
_____
_____
_____

If you did not have an induction plan, would you have wanted to receive one?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

Were the following things ready on your first day at the office?

[ ] Personal workstation / desk
[ ] PC / Laptop
[ ] Username and password to Skanska network
[ ] Phone
[ ] Access to Intranet
[ ] Electronic key to the office premises
[ ] None of the above mentioned things were ready

Was your immediate superior present on your first day at Skanska?

( ) Yes
( ) No

Mentor (aka. buddy or sponsor) is someone at a higher level (or an experienced employee at your level) who has been assigned to guide and help you during your first months in the new job.

Did you have a mentor during your induction?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

On a scale 1-5, in your opinion, how useful is a mentor during the induction phase?

(Please give your opinion even if you did not have a mentor during your induction.)

5 = Very useful   1 = Not useful at all

5	4	3	2	1	Not sure
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

The following questions refer to the content of the information that you received during your first weeks at Skanska. This information may have been provided in many different forms (booklet, intranet, presentation etc.).

Do you think the information on Skanska Group was sufficient?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

Do you think the information on Nordic Procurement Unit was sufficient?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

Did you receive information on the following topics regarding Skanska and Skanska as an employer?
(Please select as many as applicable)

[ ] Overview of Skanska Group (such as history, structure etc.)
[ ] Skanska values and aims
[ ] Code of Conduct
[ ] Green procurement
[ ] Safety
[ ] Skanska policies and procedures (such as work schedules, vacations, leaves of absence etc.)
[ ] Benefits (such as insurance, occupational health, recreational activities etc)
[ ] Admin (time reporting, cost allocations etc.)

[ ] Communication (OneSkanska and common folders)
[ ] Training possibilities
[ ] Career opportunities at Skanska Group
[ ] I did not receive information on any of the above mentioned topics

Did you receive information on the following topics regarding Nordic Procurement Unit?
(Please select as many as applicable)

[ ] NPU Organisation
[ ] NPU Strategy
[ ] NPU Functions
[ ] NPU Focus areas
[ ] Procurement Governance Model (Kuka vastaa mistäkin hankinnoissa?, Vem gör vad när det gäller inköp?, Hvem gjor hva når det kommer til innkjop? -booklets)
[ ] How to cooperate within NPU (Networks and Groups)
[ ] HanSka (only in Finland)
[ ] IBX (eProcurement/eSourcing, e.g. enSka)
[ ] Other electronic tools (e.g. BI tool)
[ ] Career opportunities within NPU
[ ] I did not receive information on any of the above mentioned topics

On which topics would you have wanted to receive more information?
(Please select as many as applicable and add more if needed)

[ ] Overview of Skanska Group (such as history, structure etc.)
[ ] Skanska values and aims
[ ] Code of Conduct
[ ] Green procurement
[ ] Safety
[ ] Skanska policies and procedures (such as work schedules, vacations, leaves of absence etc.)
[ ] Benefits (such as insurance, occupational health, recreational activities etc)
[ ] Admin (time reporting, cost allocations etc.)
[ ] Communication (OneSkanska and common folders)
[ ] Training possibilities
[ ] Career opportunities at Skanska Group
[ ] NPU Organisation
[ ] NPU Strategy
[ ] NPU Functions
[ ] Procurement Governance Model
[ ] How to cooperate within NPU (Networks and Groups)
[ ] HanSka (only in Finland)
[ ] IBX (eProcurement/eSourcing e.g. enSka)
[ ] Other electronic tools (e.g. BI tool)
[ ] Career opportunities within NPU
[ ] Other, please specify _____
[ ] Other, please specify _____
[ ] Other, please specify _____
[ ] Other, please specify _____

Do you think the information was provided timely?

( ) Yes, I received all the information on time
( ) Partly, some of the information was given too late
( ) No, all the information I got came too late
( ) Not sure

The following questions refer to the material you received during your first weeks at Skanska and the sources of induction information.

From which sources did you receive information on Skanska and NPU?

(Please select as many as applicable and add more if needed.)

[ ] Leaflet, folder or other printed material
[ ] OneSkanska -intranet
[ ] Skanska's website
[ ] E-mail from a colleague
[ ] Interactive games (e.g. Code of Conduct game on intranet)
[ ] Films
[ ] Presentations (e.g. Induction Day)
[ ] Workshops
[ ] Supervisor/Manager
[ ] Colleague
[ ] Information at the office (e.g. posters on the wall)
[ ] Other, please specify _____

From which sources would you prefer to receive the information on Skanska and NPU?

(Please select max. 4 information sources that you find most important.)

[ ] Leaflet, folder or other printed material
[ ] OneSkanska -intranet
[ ] Skanska's website
[ ] E-mail from a colleague
[ ] Interactive games (e.g. Code of Conduct game on intranet)
[ ] Films
[ ] Presentations (e.g. Introduction Day)
[ ] Workshops
[ ] Supervisor/Manager
[ ] Colleague
[ ] Information at the office (e.g. posters on the wall)
[ ] Other, please specify _____

On a scale 1-5, in your own opinion, how do these following statements match the induction material.
(Material referring to the material listed in the above questions.)

5 = Strongly agree 1 = Strongly disagree

	5	4	3	2	1	Not sure
The material was clear and easy to understand	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The material looked appealing and well made	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
There was enough material	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

How could the induction material be improved?

_____
_____
_____
_____

The following questions refer to your new role in NPU.

On a scale 1-5, how well do these statements match the experience you had regarding the induction to your role and tasks?

5 = Strongly agree 1 = Strongly disagree

	5	4	3	2	1	Not sure
My new role was clear and the management had planned the tasks before hand	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

My new role and tasks were well explained	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I was taught how to manage my tasks in practice	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The expectations for my work were well explained	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The picture I got about the role (job advert and job interview) matched the tasks in real life	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I understood how my role and my work can contribute towards Skanska values and aims	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
After the induction I felt more committed to my new role at Skanska	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I had little or no access to people who have previously performed my role in this organization	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

I would have wanted more orientation and more help with my new tasks	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
My existing know-how and expertise was appreciated and taken into account during the induction	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I got a good understanding of the unwritten rules of how things are done	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
The Nordic aspect and the Nordic interfaces regarding my role were well explained	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

How long did it take for you to fully understand your role and the expectations NPU has for your role?

( ) Less than a month
( ) 1-3 months
( ) More than 3 months
( ) Not sure

How long did it take for you to be able to work independently?

( ) Less than a month
( ) 1-3 months
( ) More than 3 months
( ) Not sure

How long did it take for you start feeling valuable as an employee?

( ) Less than a month
( ) 1-3 months
( ) More than 3 months
( ) Not sure

How could the orientation to the role and tasks be improved?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Do you think the induction included enough information on training possibilities at Skanska?

( ) Yes
( ) No, it could have included even more information on training possibilities
( ) No, it did not include any information on training possibilities
( ) Not sure

Do you think the induction included enough information on career opportunities at Skanska?

( ) Yes
( ) No, it could have included even more information on career opportunities
( ) No, it did not include any information on career opportunities
( ) Not sure

On a scale 1-5, in your opinion, how important it is to know about the future opportunities already at the induction phase?

5=Very important 1=Not important at all

5	4	3	2	1	Not sure
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Were you introduced to your colleagues?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Only to some of them
( ) No, but I introduced myself on my own initiative

Did the other employees know about your arrival before hand?

( ) Yes
( ) No
( ) Not sure

On a scale 1-5, did you feel welcomed upon your arrival to Skanska?

5=Very welcomed and 1=Not welcomed at all

5	4	3	2	1	Not sure
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

On a scale 1-5, how easy was it to integrate to the work group and get to know your colleagues?

5 = Very easy 1 = Very difficult

5	4	3	2	1	Not sure
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

How could the social experience be improved?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Do you see yourself working for Skanska in the future?

( ) Yes
( ) Yes, but for other unit/department (not NPU)
( ) No
( ) Not sure

Did the induction explain the Nordic aspect of working within Skanska NPU?

( ) Yes
( ) To some extent
( ) No
( ) Not sure

On a scale 1-5, how well do you think the induction at Skanska NPU was conducted in general?

5=Very well conducted 1=Very badly conducted

    5   4   3   2   1   Not sure

   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )

How do you recognise being part of a Nordic unit? How do you think it differs to work for a Nordic unit instead of working for a unit only at national level?

_____
_____
_____
_____

How could the overall induction experience be improved?

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