**Gaining insights from the workplace**

Take a systematic and structured approach to reflecting critically and analytically about your workplace. Use your insights to help you to prepare for more senior roles. The following sets of questions can help to guide your thinking. Jot down your observations. However, unless you have workplace permission for keeping notes about this, keep these private for personal use.

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| Gaining insights from the workplace |
| **1** | **Appointment process** |
| 1. What did the appointments process involve?
2. How typical is that likely to be of appointment processes more generally?
3. What did you do well? How do you know?
4. What could have gone better? What could you practise or prepare better for future applications?
5. If you were appointing a member of staff, would you do anything differently from those who employed you?
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| **2** | **Induction** |
| 1. Did you receive an induction to your workplace? If so, what did this cover?
2. How much were you able to remember of your induction afterwards?
3. Do you have an information pack, staff handbook or website to follow up information?
4. Do you make use of the staff information that is available to you through such means?
5. How useful was your induction to you? What were the most useful aspects?
6. Were you introduced to your colleagues?
7. Were you made to feel part of a team?
8. What do you think an induction process should cover – and be like?
9. What would you do differently if you were in charge of induction?
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| **3** | **Organisational structures** |
| 1. How easy is it for employees to find out who everyone is and what their roles are?
2. Do you know to whom you are meant to report?
3. Do you know to whom other key people with whom you work report?
4. Is there an organisational chart that illustrates the line management structure to employees?
5. What difference does it make to your working day to know the people around you?
6. Why do you think the organisation is structured in this way?
7. In your opinion, do these structures help the business run effectively – at least in relation to processes you can observe?
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| **4** | **Health and safety** |
| 1. How were health and safety considerations communicated to you?
2. How thoroughly were health and safety matters covered?
3. Was this sufficient for understanding how to work safely in your own role?
4. Did your work colleagues take health and safety matters seriously? How aware were managers of employee attitudes and behaviours?
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| **5** | **Understanding your role** |
| 1. Do you understand how your job contributes to the final product or outcome?
2. What difference does it make to your working day to know the people around you?
3. How clear is your job description? What does it say you must do?
4. How closely does the work you undertake match the job description?
5. Is the work what you expected from the information you had received in advance?
6. What initial training did you receive for the role? Was this pitched at the right level?
7. How effective was your employer in settling you into your role so that you used your time efficiently as soon as possible?
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| **6** | **Management communication with employees** |
| 1. What methods are used for communicating with employees (such as general discussion, meetings, newsletters, blogs, etc.)?
2. From what you see, hear and experience, do these methods seem broadly effective?
3. If they seem to work reasonably well, why is that?
4. If they don’t work well, why does that seem to be the case? What could be done more effectively?
5. Do employees get a chance to give their point of view on how things work?
6. If so, do they make sensible and well thought through suggestions?
7. If you were in charge, would you do anything differently to improve communications?
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| **7** | **Training and development** |
| 1. What training and development opportunities are open to you at work?
2. How did you find out about these? Were these communicated to you clearly enough?
3. What training is compulsory? Why is that?
4. How effective is the training you receive? Does it do what it should?
5. Do employees seem to value the training they receive? If not, why is that?
6. Are there are other training needs that are not currently addressed? What difference do you think it would make if such training were provided?
7. Did you make good use of the training opportunities that were open to you?
8. If so, how could you present this training to best effect in future job applications and interviews?
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| **8** | **Values** |
| 1. Does the company have a set of shared values?
2. How did you find out about these?
3. How are they communicated and promoted?
4. Are those values much in evidence in the day-to-day work of the company?
5. Do staff put the values into practice? If not, why do you think that might be the case?
6. Are the values interpreted differently within your team?
7. How do customers (or clients, patients, pupils, etc.) benefit from such values?
8. If you were in charge, what, if anything, would you change to embed company values effectively?
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