



Civil Service
Learning

The UK Experience

retaining corporate
knowledge in the UK
civil service

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What we'll cover:

- Context - the UK Civil Service
- Techniques for retaining knowledge
- Stories
- Key learning points
- Discussion and questions



The UK Civil Service

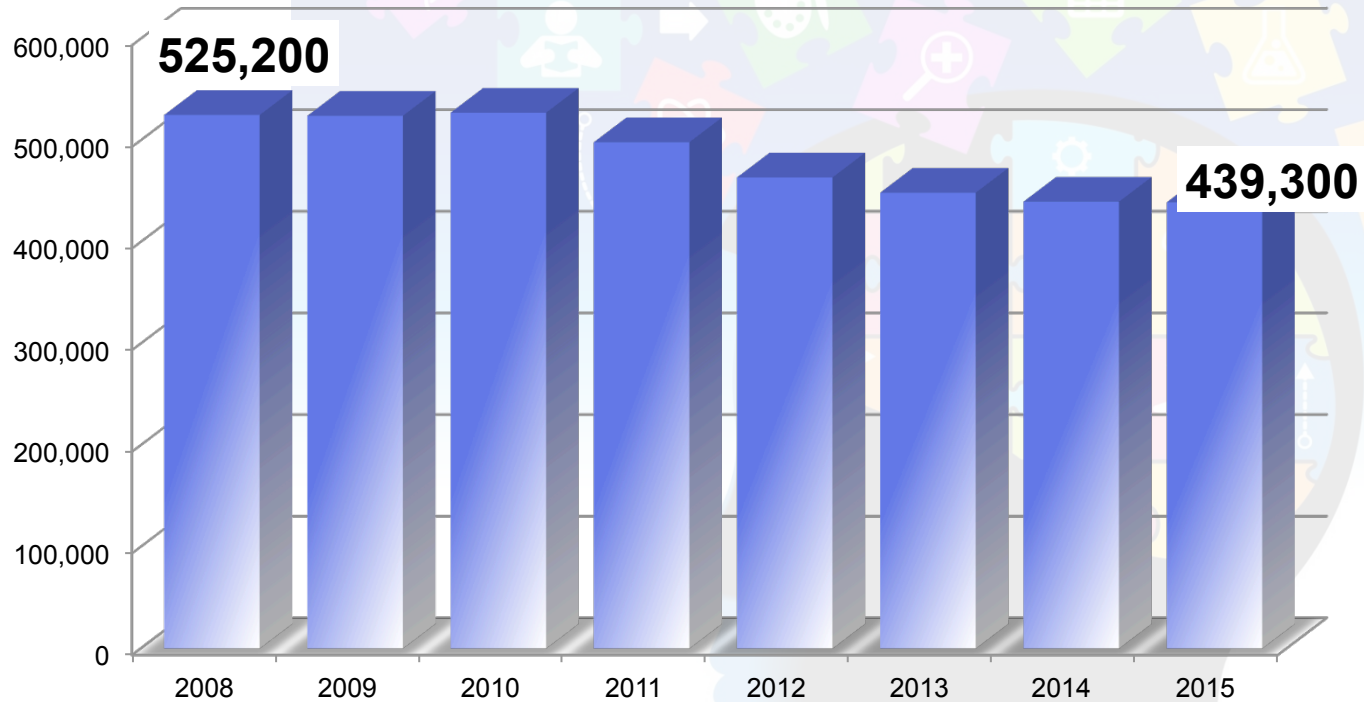
- 400,000 people
- 25 Ministerial Departments
- 21 non-Ministerial Departments
- 300+ Agencies and other bodies
- Some responsibilities UK-wide, some devolved in part...





The civil service is getting smaller...

Civil Servants

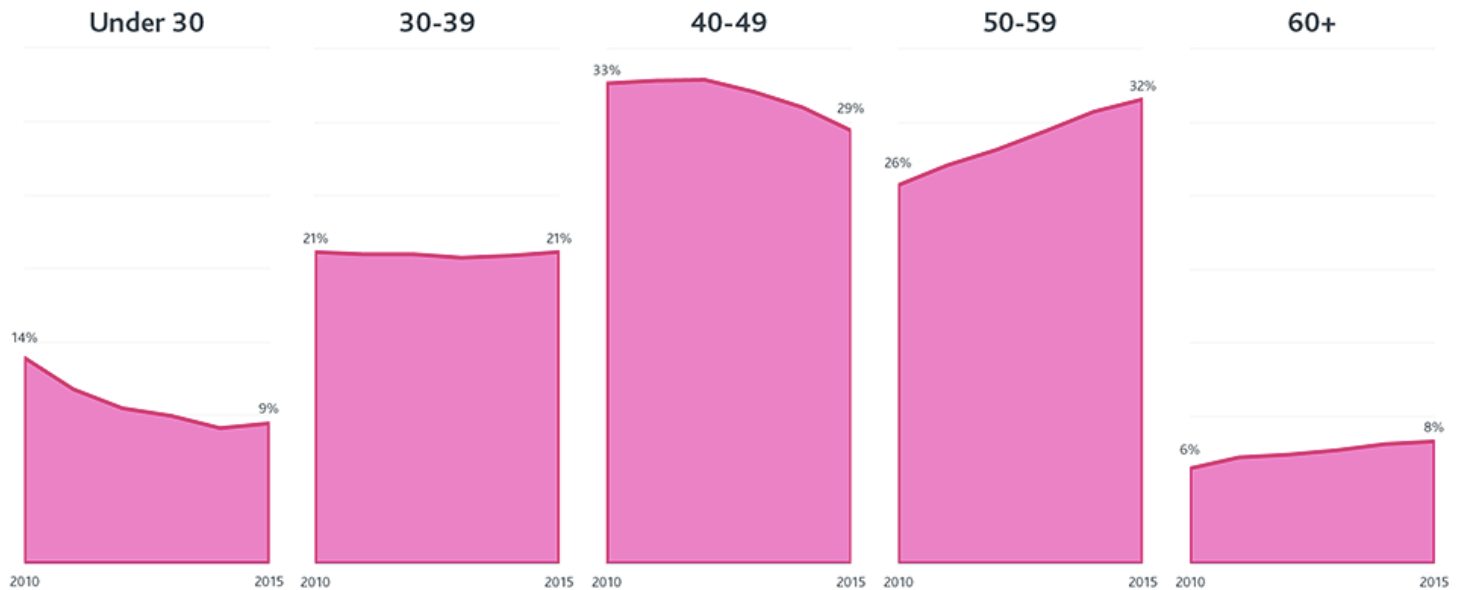


Source: UK Office for National Statistics, April 2016



...and it's getting older:

Percentage of civil servants in each age group, 2010 to 2015 (headcount)



Source: IfG analysis of ONS Annual Civil Service Employment Survey, 2010 to 2015. SCS figures also include civil servants at equivalent SCS level.



So what are we doing about it?



Different approaches across UK Government

- Handover reports
- Handover interviews
- ‘Audience with...’
- Work shadowing/parallel running



Handover reports

- Used by most Departments
- But! – irregular
- Manager discretion
- Limited effectiveness
- Culture-dependent
- Explicit information mainly



Handover checklist for managers and interviewees

1. Name of interviewer

2. Date

3. Job title and description

4. Key projects and objectives

5. Current status

6. Other points of particular responsibility

7. Name of person to contact

Ministry of Justice

Legacy handover

Before you leave, it is important that we capture all of your skills and knowledge on the policy area you work on. Please complete all sections as honestly and comprehensively as possible. Your answers will form the basis of your exit interview.

1. Basic details

Name:

Address:

Work email:

Within the MoJ? Yes No

Be contacted? Yes No

Line manager:

or (if different):

HM Treasury

Handover note

Date:

Job title:

Branch name:

Team name:

Group name:

Your name:



Handover interviews

- Used by some teams
- Good for tacit transfer
- Irregular
- Manager discretion
- Selective – key individuals

Appendix 2
Knowledge transfer prompt sheet

Department of Health & Care Change
Ministry of Justice

Legacy handover Questions

Before leaving the department, your employee must complete Legacy: this will form the basis of their exit interview.
To ensure we comprehensively capture the leaver's knowledge and skills, the questions below should be used as a guide during the meeting. It may be necessary to update the copies from feedback on from the leaver.

1. Basic details
Line manager should check section should be filled in by the leaver to save ourselves / colleagues / HR what last to have leaving?
Check with the leaver and make plan

2. Policy
Follow up questions for Section 2: P
What have you found most about?
What have you found most recent?
Is there anyone you've found part?
Is there anything you'd do differently?
Are there any lessons learnt or value?
Is there any additional context of it?
Are there any documents that you?

3. Useful contacts
The leaver should have listed at least three contacts for this area. It is worth following up questions for Section 3: U
Who do you consider are your key key stakeholders?
What tips do you have for meeting in

4. Useful resources
What training, help, useful websites, and advice did the leaver find useful when starting this project / work stream?
Answers should be recorded in Section 5: Useful resources of the Legacy form.
The line manager should ensure that the final version of Legacy is saved to the appropriate policy area or database.

5. Regular meetings
The leaver should detail any regular meetings and attach minutes of the last meeting or agendas for upcoming meetings. Answers to follow up questions below should be detailed in the additional information box in Section 4 of the Legacy form.
Follow up questions for Section 4: Regular meetings
What meetings did you attend most often?
What are the main things to look out for at the meetings?
Are the meetings productive?
Is there something you should change about the meeting e.g. frequency?
(If applicable) Have you sent meeting invites to the person taking over from you?
What are the main things to look out for at the meetings?
Are the meetings productive?
Is there something you should change about the meeting e.g. frequency?
(If applicable) Have you sent meeting invites to the person taking over from you?

6. Current projects
The leaver should detail any current tasks, their progress and outstanding actions.
Follow up questions for Section 6: U
What are the main things to look out for at the meetings?
Are the meetings productive?
Is there something you should change about the meeting e.g. frequency?
(If applicable) Have you sent meeting invites to the person taking over from you?

7. Overview
This prompt sheet is designed to help you design, plan and record knowledge transfer interviews or discussions. It is not intended to be rigid; rather it is an 'aide memoire', to be modified, added to or rearranged according to the particular circumstances. It has boxes to bear in mind:

A. Before the meeting

- Arrange a time and place for the discussion that they feel comfortable and able to
- Try to start the discussion with open-ended questions
- Identify the person or people that will be attending and therefore able to ask the questions / challenges / 'what's left to do' to be raised in the discussion
- Once you have decided on some good good ideas to send these to the mover / their thoughts.
- Ensure you are able to capture what is normally a source for more than one; agree this with the mover first, assign content only you've agreed up your notes

B. After the meeting

- Complete your notes as soon as possible and also gives you time to clarify
- Send your notes to the mover for comment
- Store securely in DECC Shares and in the mover's work going forward.

Name of knowledge transfer
Directorate and Team
Role or job title
Completed by
Other attendees
Date of discussion

16. How would you describe the main purpose of your role?

17. What would you say are the main 'value-adds' of your role?

18. What would you say are the main daily activities of your role?

19. What do you think is the most important skill or ability for your role?

20. What are the main documents and processes associated with your role?

21. What are the most important insights, or best advice you have received?

22. Any particular challenges associated with handling outstanding urgent activities?

23. Who are the most important people you work with as a result of working with them?

24. What special training or education have you undertaken to help you deliver the role?



‘Audience with...’ group interviews

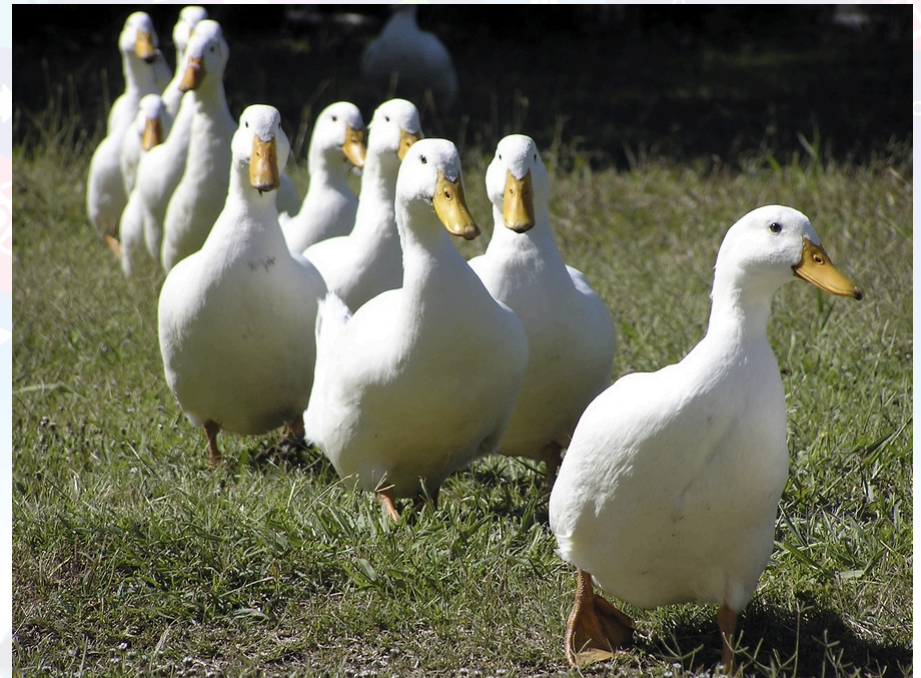


- Used by some Departments & teams
- Can be very useful – for both knowledge transfer and morale
- Need planning and time
- Good for all levels of seniority



Work shadowing ('parallel running')

- Most effective technique
- Requires time
- Can be expensive
- Often not practical or even possible





Case studies

- Training & Development Agency for Schools
- Department of Energy & Climate Change
- Welsh Government
- HM Treasury





Training & Development Agency for Schools

- 17 years old agency
- Leaders in at beginning
- Relocating 320 km
- 350 staff, 95% **not** going
- One year to plan, one year to complete move





Training & Development Agency for Schools

- Job shadowing
- Handover reports
- Handover interviews
- ‘Audience with...’ sessions



Handover checklist
For the person being shadowed

Name: _____
Job title: _____
Date: _____

1. Have you been introduced to the job?
2. Have you been given a copy of the job description?
3. Have you been given a copy of the handover report?
4. Have you been given a copy of the handover checklist?
5. Have you been given a copy of the handover interview questions?
6. Have you been given a copy of the handover note template?
7. Have you been given a copy of the handover note?
8. Have you been given a copy of the handover note template?
9. Have you been given a copy of the handover note?
10. Have you been given a copy of the handover note?

Legacy handover

1. What are the key tasks of your job?
2. What are the key responsibilities of your job?
3. What are the key challenges of your job?
4. What are the key opportunities of your job?
5. What are the key risks of your job?
6. What are the key stakeholders of your job?
7. What are the key resources of your job?
8. What are the key skills of your job?
9. What are the key knowledge of your job?
10. What are the key experience of your job?

Handover note

Date: _____

Job title: _____
Business name: _____
Team name: _____
Office name: _____

Your name: _____





Job shadowing

- In many cases could 'shadow' for 3-6 months
- Results very good – joiners up to speed quickly, few issues afterwards
- But – in many cases no leaver/joiner overlap, so no opportunity for shadowing



Handover reports

- High adoption – 80% of leavers
- Where leaver/joiner overlap – effective
- But where no leaver/joiner overlap far less effective
- Joiner needs opportunity to talk to leaver



DECC - Voluntary Exit Scheme

- 200 staff leaving 31 March 2016, out of 1,500
- Mixed skills, seniority and experience – mostly 15 years+
- Approach was to go through managers
- Provided guidance plus tools – templates, etc
- Key was to act early



DECC - Voluntary Exit Scheme

- Detailed guidance
- For managers
- Copied to leavers
- Handover reports used
- But – in many cases left too late

Securing Knowledge from movers and leavers

A guide for line managers

When someone leaves or moves on we need to secure all the documents they worked with or created, as well as keep hold of or capture the key insights and know-how they've acquired during their time in the role. We need to be proactive if we're to avoid losing important material or having to 'reinvent' how to do the leaver's work from the beginning.

1. Don't wait - start early!

There's often much more information to capture than at first appears, so several meetings or discussions will usually be necessary, each building on the last. For this reason don't wait, start as soon as you can. Initially, ask the leaver to complete a handover checklist (see example at Appendix 1); this will help indicate how much more is required and provide a basis for further knowledge gathering.

2. Identify the customer(s) for the knowledge or information

It's essential to have a customer for the leaver's knowledge, someone who will carry on the leaver's work and who has a vested interest in capturing essential know-how. This may be more than one person if the leaver's work is to be shared. If a successor has yet to be identified a temporary customer will be needed – someone that will learn from the leaver and pass on that learning when a successor is identified.

3. Decide what knowledge or information you need to capture

Be clear what you need to gather from the leaver. Don't try to capture everything the leaver knows about the role, rather focus on the key work activities and build on those.

4. Choose approach(es) to take

There are many ways to elicit or capture insights and know-how, and a combination is usually most effective:

a. Handover Checklists

As a minimum a handover checklist should be completed for every leaver, capturing the key elements of their role, main contacts and working relationships and also – crucially – a record of the files and documents they use and have created and where these are stored (see side panel). See Appendix 1 for an example checklist.

The checklist can be completed by the leaver or together with the line manager. Handover checklists are useful tools, especially if the leaver's role involves established routines or procedures. For many roles, however, additional approaches will be

Managing documents and records

All a leaver's important work-related documents – Word, PowerPoint, emails, spreadsheets and so on – should properly be stored in DECC Shares. Their locations should be recorded and included in a handover checklist. It's a good idea to ask the leaver to forward their Outlook Contacts to the line manager.

Business-related documents stored in personal Pubsites, on the Udrive, on memory sticks or other media or in email accounts should be identified and moved to DECC Shares. Once the leaver has left DECC it will be extremely difficult, often impossible, to retrieve anything that's not in DECC Shares.

Don't forget paper files either – if the leaver is working with original documents, or relies on paper files held in storage, for example, you'll need to identify these and ensure they're secure.

And finally, the leaver should delete or remove any purely personal material relating solely to themselves stored on their Pubsites or cabinets, such as relating to approvals, expenses and similar.

necessary.

b. Parallel running or work shadowing

Where the leaver's work will be carried on by a known successor – and if timing and availability permits – work shadowing is an ideal way to pass on knowledge and expertise (which can be recorded by the successor(s), using a handover checklist as a guide).

c. Knowledge transfer interviews and discussions

We can pass on far more insight and understanding through a conversation than we can write down. Therefore face-to-face discussions are one of the best ways to learn from leavers. At its simplest the successor or line manager has a discussion with the leaver, using an aide memoire such as the DECC Knowledge transfer prompt sheet at Appendix 2 to help structure and record the meeting. Where appropriate a facilitator can be used to help keep the discussion focused.

A variant of this approach is to have a structured team 'interview'. This should be facilitated, preferably by a non-team member: the facilitator leads the discussion, encouraging the leaver's colleagues to pose questions and probe for detail where appropriate. (An alternative, if timing permits, is to use regular team meetings as Q & A sessions, with the leaver's colleagues building up understanding of their work over a period of weeks).

d. 'Audience with...' sessions for senior leavers

This is an extension of the interview approach, the biggest difference being the size of audience. Often used when senior or particularly experienced colleagues leave, it provides an opportunity to a large team or directorate to learn from the leaver in a memorable way. Here's how it works:

- One or two team members act as organisers: they agree a date and time with the leaver and book a room or venue for the event, which will usually be around two hours long;
- The organisers solicit questions for the leaver from their colleagues, refine them if necessary and send to the leaver in advance of the event;
- A Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the event is agreed (this can be the leaver's successor, if there is one);
- On the day the whole team or directorate attends; the MC presents the questions, the leaver responds – and then the audience gets to ask follow-up questions. Questions and responses are recorded, for later circulation;
- In some cases the event is followed by a leaving party, which adds to the social nature of the occasion.

Through this approach a wide range of topics may be covered. Importantly, the questions are largely guided by those who will carry on the leaver's work. There are other benefits: it is a good way to recognise the leaver's contribution and can contribute to intra-team awareness and understanding.

Conclusion

There is no single way to secure knowledge and learning from leavers, as every situation is different. At the minimum a handover checklist should be completed, capturing essential details about the leaver's key activities, contacts and documents. In addition, the more direct discussions and interactions there are between the leaver and those likely to take on their work, the more certain it is that the most important knowledge and insights will be 'captured' before the leaver departs.

For further advice contact the Knowledge & Information Management team. im@decc.gov.uk



‘Audience with...’ senior Director

- Planned well ahead
- Gathered questions from team members
- Successor facilitated
- Posed questions to leaver
- Audience then responds to leaver’s answers





Welsh Government

- Lost many staff in 2008, following financial crisis
- Planned handovers, but little happened in practice
- Action was voluntary, managers waited until staff due to leave
- Found it was too late – staff not engaged
- So made permanent changes



Welsh Government – ‘Headstart’

➤ Provides rationale and timelines

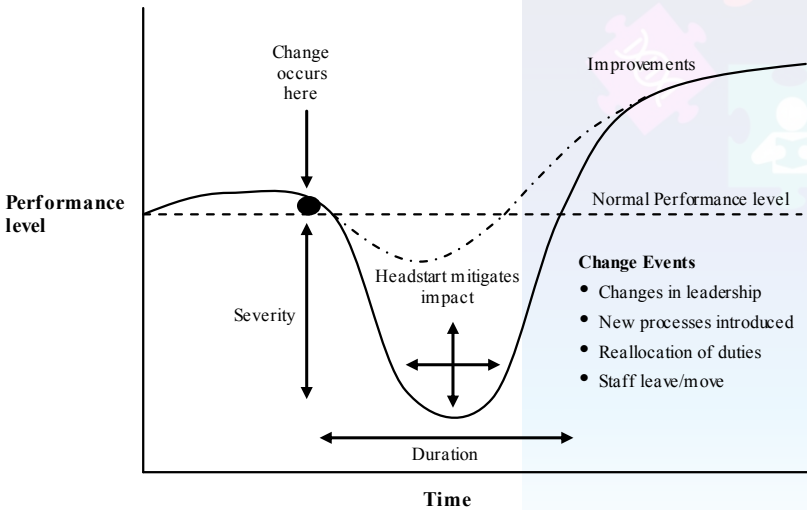


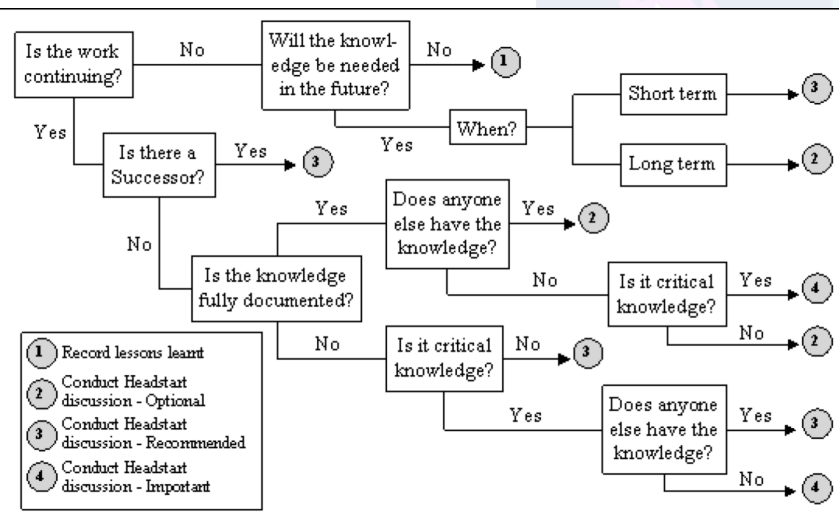
Fig 1. : Headstart mitigates the impact of change on an organisation



Welsh Government – ‘Headstart’

➤ Provides rationale and timelines

➤ Tools to prioritise – ie who to focus on





Welsh Government – ‘Headstart’

- Provides rationale and timelines
- Tools to prioritise – ie who to focus on
- Handover reports
- Interview guides
- Shared ‘living library’

Annex A

Headstart
Retaining Knowledge
Suggested Questions Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Please use this form as a template for your Headstart discussion with your moving/leaving staff member. This list of questions isn't exhaustive, therefore if you can think of any questions that you believe apply to your team locally, a space has been provided at the bottom of the form for you to record these.

Name (of staff member moving/leaving): _____
DS Area & Division: _____
Location: _____
Discussion conducted by: _____
Discussion conducted on: _____

Key events and activities
 Can you describe the cycle of activities to your job?
 Prompts:
 Regular meetings / events (including key dates)
 Peak and trough times during the year

Contacts and Relationships
 Who do you consider are your key contacts/relationships, both internal and external?
 Prompts:
 How are your key contacts shared with the rest of the team?
 Do you have any useful 'short cut' contacts who can help you to get things done?
 Do you have special relationships with 3rd parties/local authorities/professional bodies?
 Is there anyone you use for 'expert advice', decisions or permissions?
 Was anyone particularly helpful / difficult?

Knowledge required for role
 What do you consider to be the most valuable and/or unique knowledge that you hold in your current role, and how did you acquire it?
 Prompts:
 What specialist knowledge/information do you solely own/have?
 What knowledge/information do you have that you consider would be hard to replace?
 What skills or knowledge do you have that no one else in your DG / division / team has?
 Have you received any specific training that helped you in your role, if so where from?
 Are you a member of a profession and if so, which one?

Key Information Sources
 Is there any key documentation (or other source) that you find really useful in your current role?
 Prompts:
 How is this made available to others?
 Is there anything you feel was missing and would have made your life easier?
 Think about manuals, software, reference materials, newsletters and subscriptions, websites and social media accounts that you may have.



Welsh Government – job shadowing

- Senior people – paired with successors for months
- Retiring – handovers can start 2-4 years before, included in annual appraisals
- Supported and expected by leaders
- Can be very effective



HM Treasury

- Use fixed-term assignments, 18-24 months
- High turnover – 30% leave or move out each quarter
- High risk of knowledge loss
- Strong investment in routine handover processes



HM Treasury = handover process

- Driven by leadership
- Emphasis on leaver and manager
- Assessed by joiners after 3 months
- Monitored, measured, reported to leadership
- Culture – seen as ‘bad thing’ if not done
- 80%+ compliance



- CM 101
- InfoStore project
- What's a record?
- Benchmarking
- Action planning
- CM data by team
- Meeting readouts
- Being a Knowledge Champion
- How to
- CM for new joiners
- Knowledge basics
- External collaboration
- Web tools
- Links
- Knowledge and Innovation Network
- Shared documents
- Recycle Bin
- All Site Content

Handover checklist

- 1. Job title**
- 2. Introduction**
 - Team details
 - Team and group structure
- 3. Roles and responsibilities** (including links to content the role entails)
 - What the job entails
 - Area of focus for the role
 - Key outputs for the role (and where they're stored)
 - Key lines to take
 - Suggested objectives for the role
- 4. Table of work coming up in the next few weeks/months**
- 5. Meetings set up in the first few weeks, including key dates**
- 6. Horizon scanned topics that may come up in the coming weeks**
- 7. Email distribution lists**
- 8. Stakeholder information**
 - Key contacts in government, including Treasury
 - Key contacts outside government and comment
- 9. Content management**
 - How content is stored
 - Where content is stored
 - Links to content with immediate impact on ongoing work
- 10. Courses that may be of value**

HM Treasury

Handover note	Job title Branch name Team name Group name
Date	Your name

SECTION 1:

HM TREASURY

You may need to refer to the following documents:

[Development, T](#)

You may find the following documents useful:

The [About us](#) section of the Treasury website.

The Groups directory contains key documents for each group.

GROUP (GROUP NAME)

There is information available on the Treasury website for each group.

There is a group meeting schedule available on the Treasury website.

The Treasury's [SharePoint](#) contains a [Store](#) that you can use to find documents.

There are induction packs available for each group.

The (GROUP NAME) generalists meet regularly to discuss issues.

TEAM (TEAM NAME)

The Deputy Director (TEAM NAME) is responsible for the day-to-day running of the team.

The Deputy Director (TEAM NAME) is responsible for the day-to-day running of the team.

Our SharePoint site contains a team page with details of the team's work.

Responsibilities within the team are as follows:

[BRANCH NAME 1]
 [BRANCH LEAD NAMES]
 [ROLE OF BRANCH]

[BRANCH NAME 2]
 [BRANCH LEAD NAMES]
 [ROLE OF BRANCH]

[BRANCH NAME 3]
 [BRANCH LEAD NAMES]
 [ROLE OF BRANCH]

RIES - NAMES,

an around November.

[Lead, associated](#)



Assessed by joiners after 3 months



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1. W

- Excellent - comprehensive and detailed - it gave me a good understanding of the role
- Quite good - it contained useful information but there were some gaps
- It lacked
- Informative
- Very brief
- My preference
- I've taken

Please add

2. Which st

- Very useful
- Quite useful
- Too brief
- Failed
- It wasn't
- My preference
- I've taken

Please add

3. Which statement best describes the team or group induction you received (e.g. induction pack, induction session, meetings with branch head)

- Excellent
- Quite good
- Too brief
- Informative
- I had
- I didn't
- Business and International Tax
- Corporate Centre
- Economics
- Enterprise and Growth
- Financial Services
- Financial Stability
- Fiscal
- International and EU
- Ministerial and Communications
- Personal Tax, Welfare and Pensions
- Public Services
- Public Spending
- Strategy, Planning and Budget
- Treasury Legal Advisors

Please add

4. We ne

What's y

5. What g

6. What team are you in?

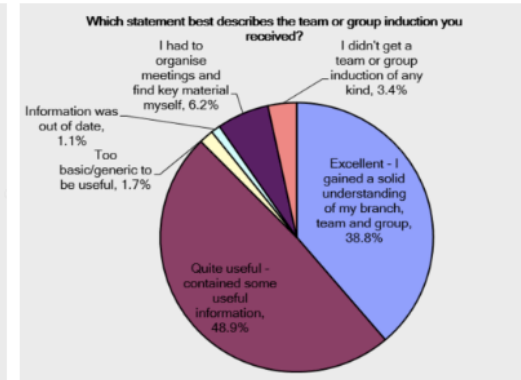
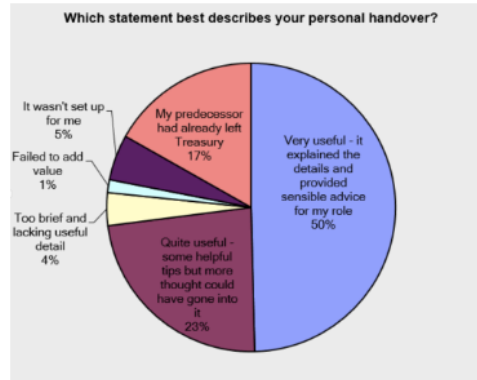
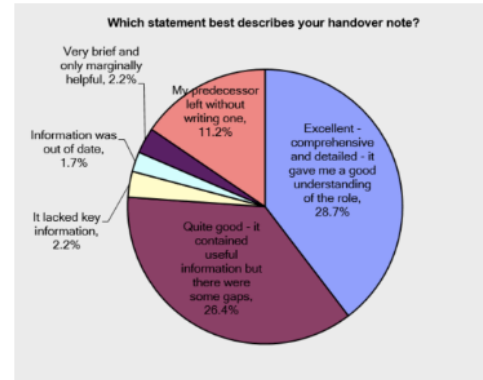
Done



Resources

Monitored, measured, reported to leadership – and on Intranet

- Handover and induction survey 2015 - results of the quarterly survey sent to all new joiners. Take a look to see what staff think about the quality of the handover and induction they received when they joined your team
- We use the [Staff Change Request site](#) to identify the new joiners and leavers. This is where requests for staff to join, move to a new role or to leave Treasury are submitted.
- These are the [survey questions](#) we use (in SurveyMonkey)



Would have been useful to have some introductory calls set up already for me on arrival to ensure that I had links to the right contacts.

The main problem is huge amount of new info to take in, opposed to any issues with the level of information provided.

Predecessor had already left post, but has been great in still finding time to have handover chats, and been very helpful when I've referred to them for help / advice on particular problems.



Key learning points

- Act as soon as possible – don't wait
- Get leadership commitment
- Focus on the recipient
- Support managers – give them the tools
- Use a range of approaches
- Measure effectiveness – and use findings
- Act as soon as possible – don't wait!



Civil Service
Learning

Eskerrik asko!
¡Gracias!
Thank you!

