SeniorSurf

Digital tutor's recruitment and induction

The recruitment and induction of volunteer digital tutors is a key part of digital guidance activities, and is well worth investing in. The aim of recruitment is to find potential tutors who are interested in and committed to guidance activities. During the induction, volunteers will get to know your organisation and the role of a digital tutor. This documentation provides you with practical tips for both recruitment and induction.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR RECRUITMENT

Sometimes the hardest part of starting guidance activities is finding tutors. Be creative and use multiple channels to attract potential tutors to your activities: attend events, speak to local associations, advertise on bulletin boards, send emails or post ads on social media or in the local newspaper.

Tips for communication

- Tell the potential tutors that, as a tutor, they do not need to know everything about the digital world – we are not looking for a superhuman.

- Provide examples of typical guidance situations.

- If you can promise a welcoming community of tutors, inform the potential tutors about it.

- Volunteers are typically motivated by their desire to help.

- Ask those already involved in the activities to spread the word and share their experiences.

- You can also organise open introduction events for recruitment purposes.

Recognise a potential tutor

- Good interpersonal skills are more important than comprehensive IT skills.

- Tutors can have a wide range of skills and professional backgrounds. Some have a degree in the field and others are self-taught – both kinds of people are needed.

- Recent retirees are often looking for new hobbies and activities.

Potential tutors are often interviewed at the recruitment stage. For examples of suitable interview questions, see the following section on induction.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR INDUCTION

During the induction, it is important to get to know the new tutor and provide them with more detailed information about the operating principles and environment. Once you know each other and how things work, everything will be easier and tutors will feel confident to get started.

Introduce your organisation

- What does your organisation do?

- What are your plans and objectives for your digital guidance activities?

- How does your organisation support digital guidance activities and the competence and wellbeing of volunteers?

- Share something personal about yourself with the tutor, such as why you enjoy this job or what you do in your spare time.

Get to know your tutor

- Why do you want to volunteer as a digital tutor?

- Have you volunteered before? What did you do, where, when and for how long?

- What is your level of IT skills?

- Are you familiar with guidance activities? Have you guided seniors in IT or any other topic?

- What are your expectations for digital guidance activities?

- Tell us more about yourself. E.g. work experience, hobbies, interests, language skills...

- How often would you like to tutor? What hours work best for you?

Discuss the content and practices of the guidance sessions

- To support the discussion, find out if there are ethical guidelines for digital support available, which address guidance activities from the perspective of both the tutor and the customer. In Finland this is provided by the Digital and Population Data Services Agency.

- Typically, customers need help with basic functions, such as the basic use of smartphones. For the most part, the guidance topics are easy to follow and the interaction with customers is pleasant.

- Each customer and guidance session is unique. The guidance should support the customer's confidence in their own skills. Customers should never feel that their problems are laughed at or belittled.

- Digital guidance sessions are confidential encounters. Customers must be able to trust that they can also ask for help with personal digital matters.

- Explain how to guide the use of banking services and other services that require strong authentication. In Finland, the ethical guidelines for digital support accept guidance for these services as well, as long as the customer registers for the service and uses it independently. Credentials must not be shared with another person.

- Also discuss how to approach and take memory disorders or challenging customers, for example, into account.

- Encourage the tutor so that they feel confident to start the guidance sessions. Decide together whether they would like an experienced tutor to help them with their first guidance session.

- Let your tutor know who they can turn to for support or advice. Remind them that they can and should always reach out and ask for help when they need it.

- Let your tutor know where they can get peer support for guidance sessions (e.g. a Facebook group).

Tasks and rules of a volunteer digital tutor in a nutshell

1. The primary role of a volunteer digital tutor is to guide seniors in the use of information technology. Guidance sessions mainly consist of individual guidance, i.e. the tutor advises one customer at a time.

2. Volunteer work is carried out with the knowledge and skills of ordinary people. The volunteer tutor does not have to know everything: answers can be sought together with customers.

3. Take each customer individually into account: possible hearing, vision or memory impairments, as well as different learning styles and opinions. Avoid recommending only one specific device, software or approach.

4. Encourage customers to ask questions. Use the clearest possible language and explain the terms where necessary.

5. The tutor should not do things on behalf of the customer but advise the customer on how to do it themselves.

6. The digital tutor does not manage the customer's finances or take possession of the customer's passwords or strong authentication credentials. The tutor knows how to guide the use of services that require strong authentication.

7. The volunteer digital tutor is bound by confidentiality. A customer or confidential matters relating to a customer should not be discussed in an identifiable manner. The digital tutor shall also make sure that they do not retain any of the customer's data after the session.

8. No financial remuneration may be accepted for guidance sessions, even if offered by the customer.

9. If the issues cannot be resolved, the aim is to refer the customer to e.g. the service provider's own service.

10. Working as a digital tutor is voluntary. Be sure to let the organiser know well in advance if you are under pressure or face challenging situations. Every volunteer has the right to stop volunteering when they feel like it. Prioritise your own wellbeing.