Office of HUMAN RESOURCES
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Onboarding Tool Kit

January 2010

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Onboarding Tool Kit 2010

Introduction

ONBOARDING AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

For senior leaders, Ohio State offers a twelve-month onboarding process with a transition coach. Senior leaders are Senior Vice Presidents, Vice Presidents, Vice Provosts, Associate Vice Provosts, Chief Information Officer, Chief Investment Officer, Deans, and the Director of the Library.

The onboarding process is intended to lay the foundation for extraordinary leadership success. It is designed to help the new leader build relationships, understand culture, and achieve results at individual, organizational unit, and University levels. The onboarding process begins at the time of employment acceptance and ends one year after the leader's start date.

Figure 1 illustrates the key components of onboarding.

FIGURE 1: SUCCESSFUL ONBOARDING

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Successful Onboarding: The Foundation for Extraordinary Leadership</th></tr>
<tr><th>Building Relationships</th><th>Understanding Culture</th><th>Achieving Results</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide the new leader in building robust relationships with:
• The person to whom the new leader reports
• All of University leadership
• Internal stakeholders
• External stakeholders (to OSU)
• Direct reports
• All reports in functional unit</td>
<td>Advise the new leader on:
• Higher education
• The state of Ohio
• OSU culture (current and aspirational)
• Culture of functional unit
• How the leader's role supports or challenges the existing cultures in which it operates
• Assessing the situation in which the new leader will function</td>
<td>Dialogue with the new leader about:
• OSU's six thematic goals
• Stakeholder expectations
• Creating integrated, aligned performance goals
• Communicating performance goals with the person to whom new leader reports and direct reports
• Early wins</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Hygiene Factors
"Hygiene" factors must be addressed so the new leader can focus his/her attention on the above. Those factors include: family relocation concerns, accurate paychecks, easy and quick enrollment into benefits programs, community announcements about the new leader, office set-up, technical capabilities, etc.</td></tr>
</table>

PRINCIPLES

The ultimate goal of onboarding is to provide the most successful transition and launch into a leadership position. To meet this goal, the following principles guide onboarding efforts at Ohio State:

- A comprehensive onboarding plan involves coordination across several offices, and takes advantage of the experiences of previous leaders.
- Onboarding plans must address hygiene factors, allowing the new leader to focus on the new leadership role, and not on self-advocating for personal needs.
- Detailed assignments of tasks, accountabilities, and time lines in the plan will increase the likelihood of success and integrated coordination.
- Assessing transition success and satisfaction with the onboarding process is embedded in the onboarding plan.

PARTNERSHIP ROLES AND THIS TOOL KIT

The Offices of Academic Affairs and Human Resources are the key sponsors of onboarding. Accountability for the onboarding plan and transition coaching rests with the Office of Human Resources Organization Development Consultant assigned to the unit/college. Figure 2 on page 4 names the Organization Development Consultants with their unit/college assignments.

Additional partners and their roles are illustrated in Figure 3 on page 5.

The purpose of this tool kit is to give detailed information on each partnership role. Figure 4 illustrates roles and responsibilities along the year-long onboarding time line.

This kit will evolve over time as new leaders are onboarded and new lessons are learned.

FIGURE 2. ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS AND COLLEGE/UNIT ASSIGNMENTS

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Arts & Sciences
  Arts & Humanities
  Natural & Physical Sciences
  Social & Behavioral Sciences
Faculty Club
Research
Student Life
	Comprehensive Cancer Center
	Health Science Library
	Health Sciences Colleges
	  Dentistry
	  Medicine
	  Nursing
	  Optometry
	  Pharmacy
	  Public Health
	  Veterinary Medicine
	Medical Center

Cindy Silver, silver.54@osu.edu, 247-4631	**Cindy Silver, silver.54@osu.edu, 247-4631**

Administration and Planning
Athletics
Board of Trustees
Business & Finance
Development
Government Affairs
Legal Affairs
President's Office
Professional Colleges
  Business
  Engineering
  Law
  Social Work
University Communications
	Academic Affairs
	Education & Human Ecology
	Food Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
	  ATI
	  Extension
	  OARDC
	Regional campuses
	  Lima
	  Mansfield
	  Marion
	  Newark
	Outreach & Engagement

FIGURE 3: PARTNERSHIP ROLES

Organization Development (OD) Consultant/Coach	College/Unit	Academic Affairs/ President's Office	Vice President for Human Resources	Additional Contacts and Resources
Provide oversight of onboarding process and ensure all partner roles are fulfilled. Coordinate an onboarding preparation meeting between self and unit contact(s). Share key university documents, such as OAA Priorities, Institutional Values, etc. Share about services offered by OD Center of Expertise and OHR. Provide transition coaching.	Communicate regularly with new leader prior to start date. Send key unit documents to the new leader in advance of appointment. Partner closely with OD Consultant in designing onboarding plan and scheduling onboarding meetings. Implement purposeful "meet and greets" when new leader is in town prior to start date, and after start date. (See template) Accommodate new leader's needs for office set-up and connectivity. Ensure accurate and timely entry of new leader data into PeopleSoft, and complete all "new hire" paperwork and processes.	Include commitment to onboarding in new leader's offer letter. Discuss this commitment. Create and publish announcement(s) of the appointment. Discuss and confirm the new leader's performance goals, and reinforce the integration of these goals into OAA and OSU priorities. If appropriate, schedule a meeting between the new leader and a member of the Board of Trustees.	Request onboarding of a new leader to the assigned OD Consultant, with a copy to Project Lead. Share with OD Consultant the goals and results the new leader is expected to achieve (discussed during selection). On an ongoing basis share about interactions and involvement with this new leader. As appropriate, make requests for OD interventions.	Talent Management Consultant: • Contract with vendor for relocation services related to moving, housing, etc. • Contract with vendor for career services for new leader's partner. Benefits Consultant: • Meet with new leader to explain benefits, and enroll in programs. • Ensure accuracy of received benefits.

FIGURE 4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TIME FRAMES

	Prior to New Leader's Start Date	Within First 30 Days of Start Date
OD Consultant	• Coordinate an onboarding preparation meeting between self and unit contact(s). • Provide oversight of draft onboarding plan to share with new leader. • Prompt Larry L. for new leaders' goals and performance expectations discussed during recruitment.	• Meet with new leader to explain the onboarding process, and Transition Coach role. • Share key university documents, such as OAA Priorities, Institutional Values, etc. • Assistant College/Unit Contact in finalizing onboarding plan. • Establish biweekly meetings with the new leader.
College/Unit Contact	• Communicate regularly with new leader prior to start date. • Send key unit documents to the new leader in advance of appointment. See list on page 37. • 1) Collaborate with the new leader to understand preferences and needs. 2) Set up the new leader's office. 3) Establish an email account.	• Schedule meetings between new leader and stakeholders included on onboarding plan.
OAA/President's Office	• Include commitment to onboarding in new leader's offer letter. Discuss this commitment. • Create and publish formal announcement(s) of the appointment.	• Discuss and confirm the new leader's performance goals, and reinforce the integration of these goals into OAA and OSU goals.
VP for Human Resources	• Share with OD Consultant the goals and results the new leader is expected to achieve (discussed during recruitment and selection).	
Benefits Consultant	• Be available to meet with new leader and/or new leader's spouse/partner • Send appropriate materials to new leader	• Meet with new leader and/or new leader's partner/spouse • Ensure 30-day enrollment deadlines met

FIGURE 4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TIME FRAMES CONT'D

	30-60 Days	60-90 Days
OD Consultant	• Meet regularly with new leader. Offer coaching. Focus on assessment of unit, and matching leader's strategy to the needs of the unit. • Offer new leader New Leader Assimilation process. • Collaborate with college/unit contact to ensure that meetings with key stakeholders are scheduled and taking place.	• Meet regularly with new leader. Offer coaching. • At 60 days, ask Project Lead to implement pulse survey.
College/Unit Contact	• Continue scheduling meetings between new leader and stakeholders included on onboarding plan. • Offer a campus tour to the new leader. • Identify and strategize about transition needs for the new leader's spouse/partner.	
OAA/President's Office	• Assess need/importance of connecting new leader to Board of Trustees. • Ensure performance expectations are shared with new leader.	• At 60 days, meet one-on-one with new leader to provide feedback. Discuss how well the new leader is building relationships, understanding culture and achieving results. Offer advice and guidance. • At 90 days, review and negotiate written performance goals.
VP for Human Resources	• Begin process to establish new leader's written performance goals.	• Finalize new leader's written performance goals by 90 days, with intent to share these goals with President/Provost. • Share performance goals with OD Consultant.
Benefits Consultant	• Ensure accuracy of paycheck deductions. • Ensure 60-day enrollment deadlines met (if any).	• Ensure 90-day enrollment deadlines met (if any)

FIGURE 4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH TIME FRAMES CONT'D

	3-6 Months	6 Months - One Year
OD Consultant	• Meet regularly with new leader. Offer coaching. • At six months, ask Project Lead to send electronic survey to direct reports of leader. Confidentially review survey results with leader.	• Meet regularly with new leader. Offer coaching. • At one year, discuss end of transition coaching. Establish agreement about ongoing coaching. • At one year, ask Project Lead to send electronic survey to leader to assess satisfaction with onboarding/onboarding success.
College/Unit Contact	• Ask for feedback on the onboarding process and plan. Offer to remedy any "misses."	
OAA/President's Office		
VP for Human Resources		
Benefits Consultant	• Ensure any 120-day or 180-day deadlines are met.	

Organization Development Consultant Information

TRANSITION COACH GUIDE

The transition coach works with the new leader from the point of offer through 12 months after his/her start date. The following plan outlines the tasks and topics that should be addressed in 90-day increments. It's understood that this process is fluid and can be adapted for individual leader's needs. In addition, the transition coach will use his/her discretion in identifying opportunities for individual assessments and goal setting for leader development, based on the natural progression of conversations with their onboarding client.

An overview of the OD consultant's role in onboarding, as well as the roles and responsibilities of others in the process, can be found in the previous section of this Tool Kit.

Tools to support the First 90 Days and the Second 90 Days can be found in the Tool Kit Appendix.

First 90 Days – The Most Intensive Work

1. **Assemble the onboarding team.** As soon as possible after the offer has been accepted and we are aware of the new leader's engagement, the ODC should begin to assemble the onboarding team. Ideally, individuals should be selected to fit one or more of the following criteria:
   - Good understanding of the new leader's role
   - Connections with various people and offices on campus; knows the right people to make things happen
   - Good communicator
   - Service attitude toward the onboarding work
   - Can make decisions about the priority of relationships and tasks for the new leader because they see the whole picture
   - Can write the onboarding plan
   - Can coordinate the implementation of the plan, while the ODC provides oversight

   The OD consultant oversees the work of the onboarding team and provides resources as needed. For example, the consultant should provide a template for the onboarding plan and perhaps sample plans for the team to review.

2. **Personally connect with the new leader.** As soon as the onboarding team has met and begun its work, the ODC should call the new leader. The purpose is to introduce the consultant to the new leader and to describe the transition coach role, how the coach is part of a larger onboarding team and the work that the onboarding team does.
   - The transition coach will send Larry Lewellen a heads-up e-mail to let him know that the coach will be in contact with the new leader.
   - Through conversation with the new leader, the coach will identify how the leader would like to receive benefits information – what aspects they are interested in and on what timeline they need the information. (e.g., He/she may be coming to campus before their start date and would like a benefits consultation at that point.)
3. **Obtain goals and expectations discussed during the leader's recruitment.** The OD consultant is responsible for obtaining this information through whatever avenue is most appropriate and timely – conversation with Larry, offer letter, etc.

4. Work with internal onboarding partners to ensure the following:

Benefits Consultant

- Ensure a meeting is scheduled for the benefits consultant and the leader to provide information, answer questions, and complete necessary paperwork. (Note: Anne will work upstream to convey information to the benefits consultant at the earliest point possible.)
- Follow-up to ensure that the right things happened as planned. Suggested check in: after first paycheck.

Talent Management (TM) Consultant

- Provide heads-up information to the TM consultant for any promises made in the offer letter for relocation, career services, spousal placement, etc.
- If needed, create an action plan to provide services and information (e.g., schools, community) or make referrals to services or vendors as appropriate and monitor the accomplishment of these steps.

Payroll (Controller's Office)

- Work with SHRP for the area to ensure correct appointment information is entered into PeopleSoft and appropriate payroll deductions are made.
- Follow up with SHRP to ensure accuracy of first paycheck.

Vice President for Human Resources (Larry Lewellen)

- Ensure an appointment with Larry and the new leader within the first 30 days of the leader's arrival.
- Keep Larry regularly informed; activate his engagement as needed. When is he the most appropriate person to … Intervene? Share information? Guide the leader?

5. Continue building relationship with new leader after their arrival.
- Meet within the first two weeks to cover basic set-up information. (See set-up document.)
- Establish ongoing meetings with the new leader. Suggested guideline: Every 2 weeks for the first 60 days; monthly after 60 days.
- Work with leader to build personal credibility for success:
    - Communication mechanisms in their unit
    - Listening to faculty and staff; learning about the unit
    - Letting people see who the new leader is, what their style is like, what people can expect from them
    - Creating a 90-day plan (tool) to understand and meet the needs of the unit.

6. Initiate discussions about "early wins." Encourage the new leader to identify successes (big and small) early on and to continue to do this. Successes can be related to relationships or tasks. Help the new leader recognize these and identify those that need to be shared with others (faculty, staff, executive manager).

7. **Coach new leader on relationship with his/her executive manager.**
   - Help them set up a series of conversations to address:
     - Their situation (Start up? Turnaround? Etc.)
     - Expectations for the business side
     - Expectations for the people in the unit
     - Leader's style and executive manager's style
     - Resources for the new leader
     - Personal development; where the new leader might need help
   - If this is a faculty leader, advising them to meet with the Provost every two-four weeks to build their relationship and provide updates on what the new leader is doing and planning to do.

8. **Begin work on the relationship between the leader and their direct reports.**
   - Consider using the New Leader Assimilation activity to help the new leader and direct reports learn about the leader's style, preferences, etc.

9. **Start conversations about understanding and shaping culture.**
   - Analysis of the unit's culture:
     - Identifying assumptions, norms, values and habits in the current culture. Using the OSU Culture Survey results and feedback from peers, staff, and constituents.
     - Identifying the strengths and weaknesses within the current culture.
     - Focusing on areas for change and strategies to implement change.
   - Analysis of the University's culture:
     - Understanding the culture shaping work and their role as a leader at OSU
     - Identifying culture shaping reinforcement strategies for their unit.

10. **Share with the new leader how the onboarding process will be measured and evaluated and how the new leader will receive feedback.**
    - Review the process and items outlined in the "Feedback to New Leader + Measures of Onboarding Success" document. Talk about how these processes will take place (e.g., how the pulse survey will be done).
    - Ensure that a <u>pulse survey</u> is conducted by the Project Lead at <u>60 days</u>.
    - Engage in a conversation about other methods of feedback that could supplement this information (facilitated conversations, focus groups, etc.).

11. **Continue to monitor the onboarding plan, ensuring that meetings are taking place and resources are being made available to the new leader.**

<u>3-6 Months</u>

The focus at this time is less on immediate transition issues and more on relationship building.

Relationship Building

- Helping the new leader identify on-campus and off-campus constituencies and the relative importance of these relationships. Encouraging them to seek input from their supervisor and key individuals in the unit.
- Suggesting regular meetings with stakeholders inside the unit, on campus and in the community. De-briefing the relationships and their effectiveness.
- Advising on communication mechanisms to share information and obtain feedback.
- Continuing to check-in on relationship with executive manager.

6-Month Evaluation

- Initiate the conversation about the 6-month evaluation process. Work with the new leader to decide:
    - Who will be involved in giving feedback?
    - How will this be communicated to those individuals?
    - How will the data be gathered, who will see it and what will be done with it?
    - What will the new leader share back with feedback sources?
    - How will they use the data to set goals?

6-12 Months

The focus expands to include:

Defining vision and long-term strategy.

- Working with the leader to define results and put a written plan together.

Building the leadership team:

- Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each member.
- Deciding who should be on the team and who shouldn't (and what other role that person might play instead).
- Bringing in new team members from inside or outside the unit; supporting their onboarding and setting clear expectations with them.

Continuing to support the culture strategy.

SET-UP CONVERSATION WITH NEW SENIOR LEADER

Template

- Welcome and introduction – OD consultant in OHRC, part of OHR.

- Message about onboarding:
  - For senior leaders, Ohio State offers a 12-month onboarding process with a ***transition coach***. The process is intended to lay the foundation for extraordinary leadership success. It is designed to help the new leader ***build relationships, understand culture, and achieve results at the individual, organizational unit and University levels.*** Larry Lewellen and the Provost strongly support onboarding for senior leaders.
  - Share onboarding roles document (who does what in onboarding).

- As a transition coach, I want to help you be successful on those 3 levels (personal, unit, University). We can:
  - Meet regularly about the onboarding process and how it's working
  - Resolve start up issues (i.e., hygiene factors)
  - Give you a space to just focus on you and what you need as the new leader
  - Use the *First 90 Days* book (give a copy) to talk about what you want to achieve, obtaining early wins, and building personal success

- How would you like to use a transition coach? Give the senior leader a couple of examples. Might not know today, so they can think about it. Could we start by meeting regularly every 2 weeks and see how that works? The agendas can be up to you or we can build them together.

- What other resources does he/she need right away?
    - Internal "guides" to the unit, to OSU?
    - Regular communication mechanisms internally?
    - Regular communication with executive manager?
    - Their assistant?
    - A peer?
    - What else?

- Give ODC contact information and the folder of documents containing:
    - President Gee's Rules of Engagement
    - Institutional Values
    - Six Thematic University Goals for Ohio State
    - Academic Plan and 2006 Update
    - University System of Ohio Strategic Plan Summary
    - Ohio State Traditions

- So, how's it going for you after (your first week, first two weeks, whatever time has elapsed since coming to campus)?

- Make next appointment with assistant on the way out

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW LEADER ON FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

Onboarding

For senior leaders, Ohio State offers a twelve-month onboarding process with a transition coach. The process is intended to lay the foundation for extraordinary leadership success. It is designed to help the new leader build relationships, understand culture, and achieve results at individual, organizational unit, and University levels. The onboarding process begins at the time of employment acceptance and ends one year after the new leader's start date.

Feedback

One element of a leader's success is timely and respectful feedback. At The Ohio State University, we aspire to create a culture of trust and openness in which the giving and receiving of feedback is abundant. With these ideas in mind, we encourage feedback throughout the onboarding process and specifically at these two points:

1. **From the hiring executive (typically the President or the Provost) two months after the new leader's start date.** The feedback should be focused on how well the new leader is building relationships, understanding culture, and preparing to achieve results.

2. **From the new leader's direct reports, six months after the new leader's start date.** An electronic survey is sent to the new leader's direct reports. The Project Lead implements this survey, on behalf of Larry Lewellen. In partnership with the new leader, the ODC identifies the direct reports to receive the survey. The compiled feedback is delivered to the new leader by the Consultant/Coach. The survey has a four-point agreement-based Likert scale and the items are:

    1. <Name of leader> has established an effective working relationship with me.
    2. <Name of leader> has established effective working relationships with key stakeholders.
    3. <Name of leader> demonstrates respect for others.
    4. <Name of leader> has a commitment to excellence.
    5. <Name of leader> understands the mission of this unit.
    6. <Name of leader> understands the culture of this unit.
    7. <Name of leader> understands the culture at The Ohio State University.
    8. <Name of leader> knows how to get things done at The Ohio State University.
    9. <Name of leader> communicates openly, honestly and directly.
    10. <Name of leader> has established and communicated an initial set of priorities.
    11. <Name of leader> has successfully transitioned into his/her leadership role.
    12. I have confidence that <Name of leader> will be a strong leader for this unit.
    13. Comments about items 1-11 or additional thoughts about how successfully <Name of leader> has transitioned into his/her new leadership role.

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW LEADER ON MECHANISMS TO ASSESS ONBOARDING EFFECTIVENESS

Measures of Onboarding Effectiveness

Assessing a new leader's experience, and determining if there are outstanding onboarding needs are significant reasons to measure how well onboarding is meeting expectations. In addition, the onboarding process can be improved for each new leader to Ohio State. For these reasons, the effectiveness of onboarding will be collected in two ways:

1. <u>A pulse survey will be done approximately two months after the new leader's start date</u>. This pulse survey will be conducted by someone other than the Consultant/Coach (typically the Project Lead). It will be simple and quick, and often done by telephone. The pulse survey questions are:

    1. How is your onboarding experience to date? What's missing?
    2. What has been most useful to you?
    3. How does the onboarding at OSU compare with onboarding you have experienced at other institutions?
    4. What one thing do you recommend occur differently with the next leader we onboard?

2. <u>One year after the new leader's start date, an electronic survey will be sent to him/her to assess perception of onboarding effectiveness</u>. The survey has a four-point agreement-based Likert scale and the items are:

    1. My onboarding experience, helped me to:

        a) build the relationships I need to effectively perform in my role.
        b) understand the culture of The Ohio State University.
        c) align my performance goals with those of the university and university leadership.
        d) learn how to get things done in this institution.
        e) match my leadership strategy with the current situation in my unit.
        f) build a leadership team within my unit.
        g) receive timely feedback from my direct reports.
        h) receive timely feedback from the person to whom I report.
        i) take thoughtful action as a new leader.
        j) personally assimilate into The Ohio State University.

    2. What has been most valuable to you in your onboarding?
    3. What recommendations do you have for the next leader who is onboarded?

EMAIL MESSAGE TO PROMPT PULSE SURVEY

Message to: New Leader's Assistant (copy New Leader if you know that is his/her preference)

Message from: Project Lead or OD Consultant assigned to conduct pulse survey (someone other than the OD Consultant/Transition Coach)

To Be Sent: Approximately 2 months after New Leader's Start Date

Draft Message:

Hi <Name of Assistant>,

At the request of Larry Lewellen, I am interested in scheduling a 15-minute phone conversation with <First Name of new leader>. The purpose of this conversation is to assess the onboarding <First Name of new leader> received. We want to make sure <First Name of new leader> got what he/she needed, that we fill in any existing gaps, and that we offer him/her a chance to give us feedback. I appreciate your help in identifying a date and time when <First Name of new leader> and I can connect. My availability follows:

Thank you for your assistance,

Name
Signature lines

EMAIL MESSAGE TO PROMPT FEEDBACK FROM DIRECT REPORTS

Message to: Direct reports of new leader (the list of direct reports is to be determined by OD Consultant/Transition Coach and given to Project Lead in an excel format)

Message from: Project Lead on behalf of Larry Lewellen

To Be Sent: Approximately 6 months after New Leader's Start Date

Draft Message:

Dear <First Name of Direct Report>,

<First and last name of leader> is engaged in an onboarding process designed to lay the foundation for extraordinary leadership success. One element of a leader's success is timely and respectful feedback. At The Ohio State University, we aspire to create a culture of trust and openness in which the giving and receiving of feedback is abundant. With these ideas in mind, you are encouraged to give feedback to <first name of new leader>.

Please reply candidly to this survey. It will take you 15 minutes or less to complete.

Your individual responses will be not be identified. Your results will be aggregated with the responses of all who are completing this survey. <Name of Organization Development Consultant> from the Office of Human Resources will be sharing the aggregate feedback with <first name of leader>.

Please complete this survey no later than <date>. Thank you for contributing to the success of your leader and The Ohio State University.

Sincerely,

Larry Lewellen, Vice President for Human Resources

EMAIL MESSAGE TO PROMPT ASSESSMENT OF ONBOARDING EFFECTIVENESS

Message to: New Leader

Message from: Project Lead on behalf of Larry Lewellen

To Be Sent: Approximately 1 year after New Leader's Start Date

Draft Message:

<First name of leader>,

This quick survey is to assess your onboarding experience. It will serve two purposes: to determine if you have outstanding onboarding needs, and to measure how well onboarding met your expectations. Your feedback will help strengthen the onboarding process for all new leaders to Ohio State.

Please complete this survey no later than <date>. It will take you 15 minutes or less to complete. Thank you for your candid responses.

Sincerely,

Larry Lewellen, Vice President for Human Resources

NEW LEADER ASSIMILATION PROCESS

Objective
The New Leader Assimilation process is a mechanism for promoting effective communication and working relationships between a new leader and his/her immediate support staff.

The New Leader Assimilation process is designed to facilitate the rapid development of a strong, positive working relationship between the new leader and his/her immediate staff. The concept is based on the idea that effectiveness of this relationship is impacted by shared understanding and knowledge. This is, in a large part, developed through two-way communications. The assimilation process is therefore aimed at promoting immediate, open, two-way communication concerning issues that are relevant to the new leader and staff relationship.

Facilitator
The role of the facilitator is to:
- Brief the new leader
- Ensure the team understands the purpose
- Draw questions from the group
- Ensure the manager understands and deals with each point
- Be mindful of time
- Facilitate the discussion as appropriate

Timing
Allow approximately 1 hour to work with the team.

Break and preparation time for the new leader – 15 minutes.

New leader to review the information with the team – approximately 1 hour.

Venue
Somewhere informal, quiet, and away from day-to-day distractions.

The Process

In advance	The facilitator meets with the new leader to: • Explain the process • Sell the benefits • Ensure she/he is committed to the process and open to what will be offered
In advance	Team members are invited to the session by the new leader. A brief description of the purpose and format are given in the invitation.
10 minutes	The facilitator and the new leader meet with the entire team. The new leader opens the session, giving the message that he/she is looking forward to it, and that this is a great way to build an effective relationship. (The new leader then leaves the session.)
15 minutes	The facilitator then explains to the team the purpose and format of the session. The facilitator gathers questions from the team that they want the new leader to answer. Some commonly used questions are: *Recommended:* 1. What do we already know about the new leader? (personal or business, married/partnered, worked in the armed services, has a cat, etc., etc.) 2. What don't we know, but would like to know about? (management style, goals for the year, upcoming changes, etc., etc.) 3. What does the new leader need to know about the team? (strong personalities, tenure, flexible work schedules, issues, etc., etc.) 4. What are the problems and challenges the new leader (or the team as a whole) will be facing? *Additional:* 5. What does the new leader need to know about us as individuals? 6. What specific suggestions do we have for overcoming points raised in #4? 7. What are some of the obstacles/enablers regarding meeting the challenges? 8. What are our general concerns? 9. What is our vision? 10. What would we like to see more of/less of? 11. What are the team's goals? 12. What information or action do we most want from the new leader? Write one question on a piece of flip chart paper and post it on the wall. Ask

	each team member to respond to all questions. Explain that no one will be asked to identify which comment they wrote. Also explain that the flip chart papers will be typed up for circulation later, along with the new leader's responses.
35 minutes	Allow team members to write their responses to each question.
15 minutes	Offer a break to the team members. Bring the new leader back in to read the group questions and comments and to prepare some tentative answers.
1 hour	Bring the group back into the room and facilitate the new leader responding to the group. Capture responses as they are written. Invite dialogue.
After the session	Type up a summary including the flip chart papers and commitments/actions. Ask the new leader to approve the typed up summary. Distribute the summary to all who participated.

Unit/College Contact Information

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIT/COLLEGE CONTACT

The people within the new leader’s unit or college will be critical to the new leader’s assimilation to Ohio State.

Some of the key responsibilities of the unit/college contact are:

- Communicate regularly with the new leader prior to his/her start date.
- Send unit documents to the new leader in advance of his/her appointment.
- Partner closely with the OD Consultant/Transition Coach in designing an onboarding plan.
- Schedule onboarding meetings.
- Implement purposeful “meet and greets” when new leader is in town prior to start date, and after start date.
- Accommodate the new leader’s needs for office set-up and connectivity.

This section of the tool kit is designed to support the unit/college contact in carrying out the above responsibilities.

CHECKLIST – PRIOR TO NEW LEADER'S ARRIVAL

- ___ Consider calling the new leader's assistant at his/her current (soon to be former) place of employment. Ask all or some of the items below.
- ___ Ask new leader:
  - ___ Phone number and email address to be used during transition period.
  - ___ Connectivity needs during transition period.
  - ___ Permanent equipment needs (laptop, type of phone, etc.)
  - ___ Preference for name on business cards, etc.
  - ___ Preference for office furniture and office supplies.
  - ___ Memberships/journals new leader belongs/subscribes. Offer to complete change of address notifications.
  - ___ Plans to travel to campus/Columbus prior to start date.
- ___ If travelling to campus/Columbus prior to start date, arrange for relevant "meet and greet" event.
- ___ Order:
  - ___ Stationery, business cards, memo pads, etc.
  - ___ Office furniture, if necessary.

- ___ Compile and send documents to new leader:
  - ___ Unit/college strategic plan
  - ___ Annual reports/updates to strategic plan
  - ___ Unit/college budget
  - ___ List of standing meetings with description of the meeting purpose and a list of attendees.
  - ___ Unit/college organizational chart.
  - ___ Unit/college publications for students, alumni, external audiences.
  - ___ Unit/college diversity report.
- ___ Establish OSU email address.
- ___ Acquire office keys for new leader.
- ___ Offer assistance with personal matters:
  - ___ Locating a residence.
  - ___ Schools for dependents.
  - ___ Partner employment.
- ___ Ensure announcement about new leader is written and appropriately distributed.
  - ___ In collaboration with College/Unit Communications Director and Office of Academic Affairs/Office of the President, ensure announcement is written.
  - ___ With Communications Director and the Office of Academic Affairs/Office of the President, agree to the distribution list for the announcement.
- ___ Be prepared for meeting with OD Consultant by brainstorming the key constituents the new leader should meet with during first 30, 60 and 90 days.

KEY CONSTITUENTS FOR ONBOARDING MEETINGS

First 30 Days	
	Individual meeting with the person to whom the new leader reports.
	Individual meetings with the most critical college/unit personnel, including the new leader's direct reports.
	College/unit committees.
Within First 90 days	
	Senior VP for Business and Finance
	Senior VP for Development
	Senior VP for University Communications
	Senior VP for Outreach and Engagement
	Senior VP for Government Affairs
	VP for Human Resources
	VP for Research (for Deans)
	VP for Legal Affairs and General Counsel
	VP for Student Life
	Provost (if Vice President)
	Chief Information Officer
Within First 120 Days	
	Executive Deans
	All Deans
	Vice Provosts
	Faculty leadership
	External committees
	Advisory groups

(Note: Where does Executive Health go?)

EMAIL TEMPLATE FOR SCHEDULING INDIVIDUAL ONBOARDING MEETINGS

Dear <Name>,

As you are aware, <name of new leader> is assuming the role of <title of new leader> on <new leader’s start date>. As part of the onboarding for <name of new leader>, I am requesting a one-hour conversation between the two of you. The purposes of this meeting are to:

- Create an opportunity for interpersonal connection
- Share university-wide initiatives/strategies arising from your unit
- Give historical information and data about the ways in which your unit interacts with <name of new leader’s unit>
- Provide your perspective of how work gets accomplished and how decisions get made at Ohio State
- Offer insights on the culture of The Ohio State University

Please let me know your availability for this meeting. I will work with <name of assistant> to establish the meeting date and time.

Thank you,

Benefits Consultant Information

Onboarding Tool Kit 2010

Information for the New Leader

INTRODUCTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION – Rick?

KEY INSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS

To give the new leader as much background information and context for what is to come, sending key institutional documents in advance of the leader's arrival will be helpful. Those documents include:

- The Academic Plan and 2006 Update
- Rules of Engagement
- FY 09 Roadmap Report to BOT
- Our Institutional Values

These documents, and more, can be found in s:/ohrc/organization dev/leadership development/onboarding/documents 4 new leaders

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW LEADER ON FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

Onboarding
For senior leaders, Ohio State offers a twelve-month onboarding process with a transition coach. The process is intended to lay the foundation for extraordinary leadership success. It is designed to help the new leader build relationships, understand culture, and achieve results at individual, organizational unit, and University levels. The onboarding process begins at the time of employment acceptance and ends one year after the new leader's start date.

Feedback
One element of a leader's success is timely and respectful feedback. At The Ohio State University, we aspire to create a culture of trust and openness in which the giving and receiving of feedback is abundant. With these ideas in mind, we encourage feedback throughout the onboarding process and specifically at these two points:

3. **From the hiring executive (typically the President or the Provost) two months after the new leader's start date.** The feedback should be focused on how well the new leader is building relationships, understanding culture, and preparing to achieve results.

4. **From the new leader's direct reports, six months after the new leader's start date.** An electronic survey is sent to the new leader's direct reports. The Project Lead implements this survey, on behalf of Larry Lewellen. In partnership with the new leader, the ODC identifies the direct reports to receive the survey. The compiled feedback is delivered to the new leader by the Consultant/Coach. The survey has a four-point agreement-based Likert scale and the items are:

    14. <Name of leader> has established an effective working relationship with me.
    15. <Name of leader> has established effective working relationships with key stakeholders.
    16. <Name of leader> demonstrates respect for others.
    17. <Name of leader> has a commitment to excellence.
    18. <Name of leader> understands the mission of this unit.
    19. <Name of leader> understands the culture of this unit.
    20. <Name of leader> understands the culture at The Ohio State University.
    21. <Name of leader> knows how to get things done at The Ohio State University.
    22. <Name of leader> communicates openly, honestly and directly.
    23. <Name of leader> has established and communicated an initial set of priorities.
    24. <Name of leader> has successfully transitioned into his/her leadership role.
    25. I have confidence that <Name of leader> will be a strong leader for this unit.
    26. Comments about items 1-11 or additional thoughts about how successfully <Name of leader> has transitioned into his/her new leadership role.

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW LEADER ON MECHANISMS TO ASSESS ONBOARDING EFFECTIVENESS

Measures of Onboarding Effectiveness
Assessing a new leader's experience, and determining if there are outstanding onboarding needs are significant reasons to measure how well onboarding is meeting expectations. In addition, the onboarding process can be improved for each new leader to Ohio State. For these reasons, the effectiveness of onboarding will be collected in two ways:

3. A pulse survey will be done approximately two months after the new leader's start date. This pulse survey will be conducted by someone other than the Consultant/Coach (typically the Project Lead). It will be simple and quick, and often done by telephone. The pulse survey questions are:

    5. How is your onboarding experience to date? What's missing?
    6. What has been most useful to you?
    7. How does the onboarding at OSU compare with onboarding you have experienced at other institutions?
    8. What one thing do you recommend occur differently with the next leader we onboard?

4. One year after the new leader's start date, an electronic survey will be sent to him/her to assess perception of onboarding effectiveness. The survey has a four-point agreement-based Likert scale and the items are:

    4. My onboarding experience, helped me to:

        k) build the relationships I need to effectively perform in my role.
        l) understand the culture of The Ohio State University.
        m) align my performance goals with those of the university and university leadership.
        n) learn how to get things done in this institution.
        o) match my leadership strategy with the current situation in my unit.
        p) build a leadership team within my unit.
        q) receive timely feedback from my direct reports.
        r) receive timely feedback from the person to whom I report.
        s) take thoughtful action as a new leader.
        t) personally assimilate into The Ohio State University.

    5. What has been most valuable to you in your onboarding?
    6. What recommendations do you have for the next leader who is onboarded?

Appendix A, Tools for the First 90 Days

ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP STYLE

This assessment will help assess your leadership style and how it may be helping or hindering you. Style is a matter of preferences and inclinations, not abilities. It has to do with what you prefer to do and how you prefer to act in particular situations. Style runs deep, but isn't destiny.

Assessing your problem preferences

Every leader prefers certain kinds of problems and challenges. This is not a matter of avoiding certain problems; it is a question of *preferences*. The table that follows is a simple tool for assessing your preferences.

For each cell in the table, assess your intrinsic interest in *solving problems* in the domain in question. In the first row, for example, ask yourself how much you like to redesign appraisal-and-reward systems, how much you like to deal with employee morale issues, and how much you like to grapple with matters of equity and fairness.

Rank each item separately, on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (very much). *Keep in mind that you are being asked about your intrinsic interest in problems of different kinds, not your skill or experience.*

appraisal-and-reward system design ------------	employee morale ------------	equity/fairness ------------
management of financial risk	budgeting ------------	cost-consciousness ------------
product positioning ------------	relationships with customers ------------	customer focus ------------
product or service quality ------------	relationships with distributors and suppliers ------------	continuous improvement ------------
project-management systems ------------	relationships among R&D, Marketing, and Operations ------------	cross-functional cooperation ------------

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE BEFORE COMPLETING THE TABLE

Transfer your scores from the table on the previous page to the corresponding cells in the table below, and sum the three vertical columns. These column totals represent your preferences among technical, cultural, and political problems. If one number is substantially lower than the rest, it represents and potential blind spot.

Then sum the totals for the five horizontal rows. These totals represent your preferences among function-related problems.

Function	*Technical*	*Political*	*Cultural*	**Total**
Human Resources				----------
Finance				----------
Marketing				----------
Operations				----------
Research and Development				----------
Total	----------	----------	----------	----------

In what spheres are you most and least interested in solving problems? Why?

What are the implications of your problem preferences for potential blind spots during a transition?

Assessing Your Leadership Style

Differences between my leadership style and those of others have proven to be problematic in previous positions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

What was the most difficult situation involving style differences that you have faced in the past and how did you deal with it?

____

____

____

"Style" encompasses a wide array of leadership behaviors. So it's useful to unbundle the elements of leadership style in order to better understand how you and others behave. In this instrument, four distinct elements of leadership style are assessed:

☐ *Learning style* – how you prefer to learn

☐ *Communication style* – how you prefer to communicate with others

☐ *Motivational style* – how you prefer to motivate others and be motivated

☐ *Decision-making style* – how you prefer to make important decisions

Learning Style

This section will help you assess how you prefer to *learn*.

On balance, do you put more stock in hard data (numbers and analyses) or soft data (expert assessments and others' observations)? **Note:** You probably rely on both, but which do you give more credence to?

☐ Hard data ☐ Soft data

On balance, do you prefer to learn by diving into a situation (an experiential learning style) or by observing for a while before taking action (a conceptual learning style)? **Note:** Once again, you probably do both, but which feels most natural to you?

☐ Dive in ☐ Observe for a while

What are the implications of your learning style for potential blind spots during a transition?

____

____

____

Communication Style

This section will help you assess how you prefer to *communicate with others*.

On balance, do you like subordinates to communicate with you in writing (including e-mail) or in conversation (including voicemail)?

☐ Writing ☐ Conversation

On balance, how often do you prefer to interact with key subordinates in a given week? _____ times

What are the implications of your communication style for potential blind spots during a transition?

____

____

____

Motivational Style

This section will help you assess how you prefer to *motivate others and to be motivated yourself.*

Do you tend to motivate people more through "push" methods, such as setting goals, measuring performance, and defining rewards and punishments, or "pull" methods such as creating a vision and inspiring teamwork? If you use both methods, identify which you rely on more heavily.

☐ Push methods ☐ Pull methods

Which motivational methods are you yourself more responsive to, push or pull methods?

☐ Push methods ☐ Pull methods

To what extent do you change your motivational approach in light of your assessment of how particular individuals prefer to be motivated?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all			Occasionally			To a large extent

What are the implications of your motivational style for potential blind spots during a transition?

Decision-making Style

This section will help you assess how you prefer *make important decisions.*

When you have an important decision to make, do you prefer to (1) consult subordinates and then make the call or to (2) build consensus among your subordinates? If you use both approaches, which do you tend to rely on more?

☐ Consult and then decide ☐ Build consensus

Do you sometimes change your approach to decision making depending on the issue at hand?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Rarely		Occasionally		Often	Very often

In comparison to the typical manager at your level in your organization, do you tend to delegate more or less responsibility to subordinates?

☐ Delegate more than average ☐ Delegate Less than average

What are the implications of your decision-making style for potential blind spots during a transition?

DIAGNOSING YOUR SITUATION

Four classic types of situations that new leaders encounter are *startup, turnaround, realignment,* and *sustaining success.* As summarized below, different types of transition situations pose specific and dissimilar challenges. Each also provides unique resources upon which you can draw.

Type	Description	Challenges	Resources
Startup	Assembling the capabilities (people, financing, technology) to get a new business or project off the ground.	▪ Building structures and systems from scratch without a clear framework or boundaries. ▪ Welding together cohesive high-performing team ▪ Making do with limited resources	▪ You can do things right from the beginning. ▪ People are energized by the possibilities. ▪ There is not preexisting rigidity in people's thinking.
Turnaround	Turning around a business acknowledged to be in serious trouble.	▪ Re-energizing demoralized employees and other stakeholders. ▪ Handling time pressure and having a quick and decisive impact. ▪ Going deep enough with painful cuts and difficult personnel choices.	▪ Everyone recognizes change is necessary. ▪ Affected constituencies offer significant external support. ▪ A little success goes a long way. ▪ You have some credibility at the outset.
Realignment	Changing the culture of a previously successful organization that now faces serious challenges.	▪ Convincing employees that change is necessary. ▪ Restructuring the top team and refocusing the organization.	▪ The organization has significant pockets of strength. ▪ People want to see themselves as successful.
Sustaining success	Succeeding a highly-regarded leader in a business with a stellar record of accomplishment.	▪ Living in the shadow of the revered leader and dealing with the team he or she created. ▪ Playing good defense by avoiding decisions that cause problems. ▪ Finding ways to take the business to the next level.	▪ A strong team may already be in place. ▪ People are motivated to succeed. ▪ Foundations for continued success (such as the product pipeline) may be in place.

Whether you are taking over an entire organization or leading a unit or initiative within your existing organization, you can use this framework to assess your strengths and weaknesses. A startup, for example, may be a new entrepreneurial venture or the launch of a new product in an established company. Likewise, a turnaround can involve a new (to you) business or a troubled unit within your company.

Assessing your preferences

Different transition situations demand different skills. Someone who is good at turnarounds may be ineffective in realignment situations that call for painstaking work to develop coalitions in support of change. Likewise, someone who is good at realignments may not more quickly and decisively enough for a turnaround situation.

Which of the four types of situations – startup, turnaround, realignment, sustaining success – do you most prefer? Why?

Which do you least prefer? Why?

What do these preferences say about your strengths and weaknesses as a transition leader?

Assessing your situational vulnerabilities

Which of the four types of situations are you entering this time?

What are the three most demanding challenges you expect to face?

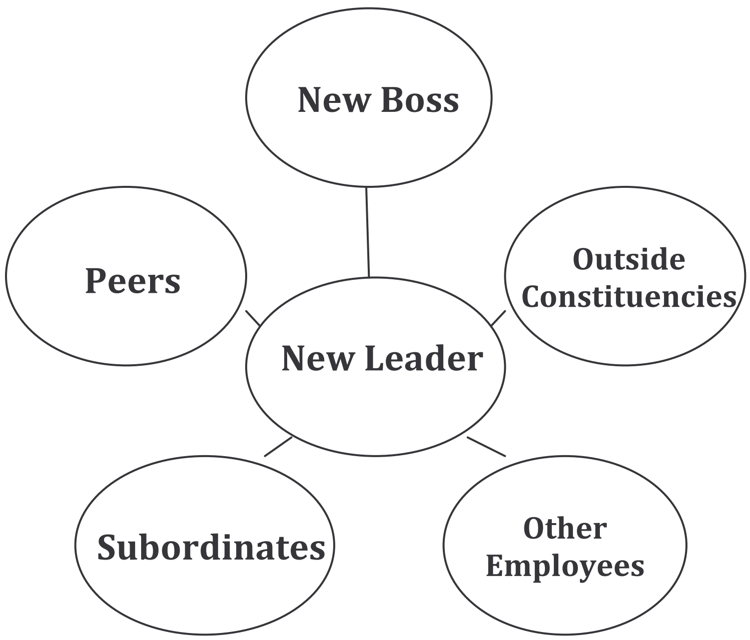
1.
2.
3.

Think about your skills and status. What are your particular vulnerabilities in this situation? *Note that your status in the organization can create vulnerabilities. For example, people brought in from outside often have trouble in realignment and success-sustaining situations; it's much easier for them to lead startups or turnarounds.*

What implications do you see for the kinds of support you will need?

TRANSITION SOCIAL SYSTEM

You aren't the only one going through a transition. As illustrated below, you are part of a transition social system; to varying degrees, your transition impacts everyone in the system. Subordinates and employees will have to adjust to your style and expectations, and may be apprehensive about your arrival. Your new boss may be dependent on people outside your direct line of command – peers and key external constituencies such as customers, suppliers, and distributors – with whom you have no relationship capital.



You can begin to define your influence goals for each of these groups by answering the following questions:

- ☐ What do I want to achieve with each group?
- ☐ What will my initial priorities be?
- ☐ How can I most effectively exert influence?

In the past where have you been most and least effective in building relationships in the transition social system?

Building and losing credibility

Personal credibility is necessary to build productive working relationships with everyone in the transition social system: your boss, subordinates, peers, other employees, and key external constituencies. With rare exceptions, credibility is neither built nor lost in a an hour or a day. It emerges from others' initial assessments of your patterns of conduct: what you say, what you do, and the relationship between the two. Are you consistent? Can your word be trusted? Early in your transition, people will be straining to take your measure and dissect your every move. Once they make up their minds, their opinions will tend to solidify and be difficult to change.

Think about individuals you have observed in new leadership positions. How have you seen new leaders lose credibility and undermine their own effectiveness?

How have you seen new leaders build credibility and leverage themselves at the outset?

ASSESSING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BOSS

Based on what you know now about your new boss, answer the following questions:

What is your current understanding of your boss's expectations? What would you have to do to succeed in his or her eyes? By when?

How does your boss's style differ from your own? Look at your assessment of your own style in the Assessment of Leadership Style. Then, to the best of your ability, fill it out for your new boss. How much information do they want? When and in what form? How does your new boss prefer to learn? To communicate? To motivate? To make decisions?

What role does your boss want to play during the transition period?

How will you get on your boss's agenda? How will you communicate what you need?

Planning for your next meeting

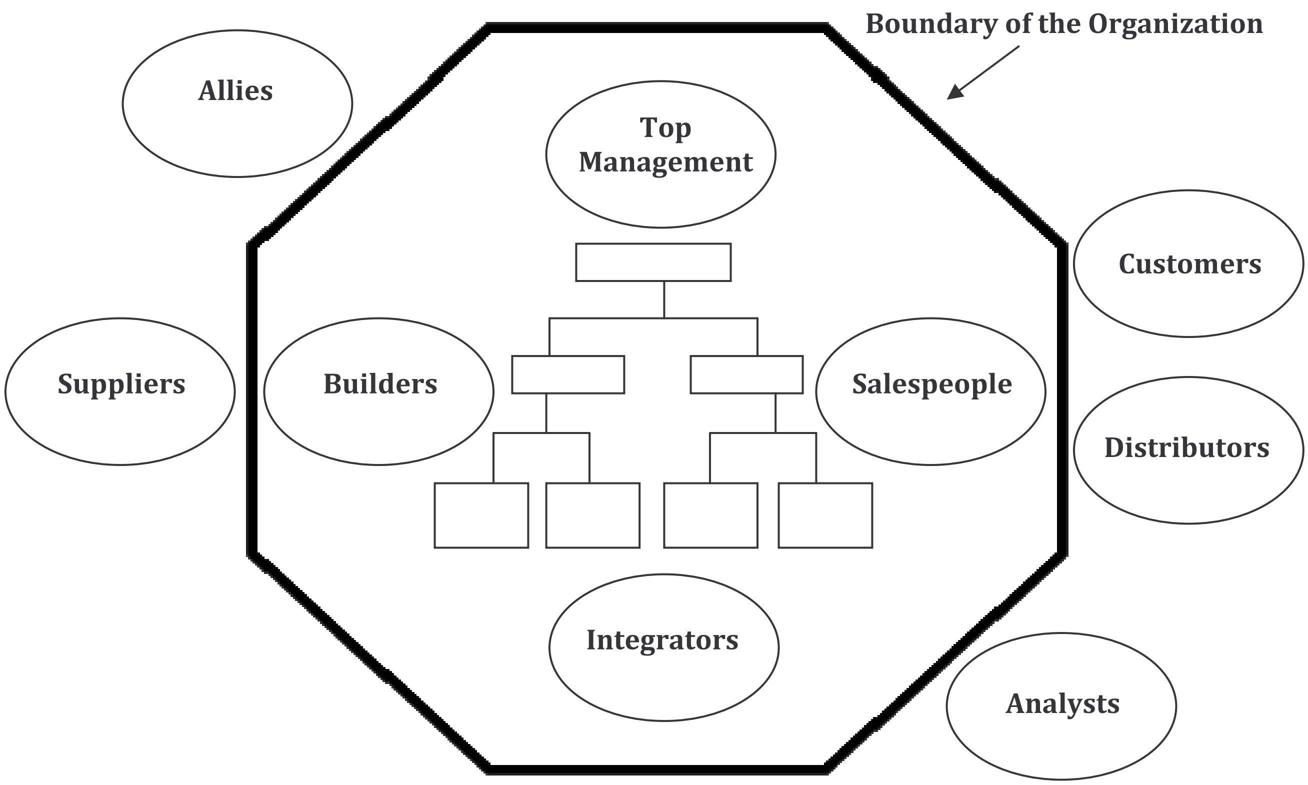
Think about your interactions with your new boss so far. On the basis of these experiences and your assessments of your own and you boss's styles and preferences, draw up an agenda for your next meeting.

Now think about the meeting from your boss's point of view. What is his or her agenda likely to be? If it's different from yours, why? What are the likely implications of this difference?

Finally, think about the key messages you want to convey *in the first few minutes of the meeting.* It's essential for you to drive this conversation. What impressions do you want to create? How are you going to do so?

IDENTIFYING WHOM TO LEARN FROM

Identifying the most promising sources of insight into the organization will make your learning more efficient and effective. Key sources of knowledge are summarized in the diagram below. Builders are the people who manufacture your products or deliver your services. Integrators are people who coordinate or facilitate cross-functional interaction.



Observing from multiple points of view

To help structure your learning, think in terms of examining your new organization from five distinct points of view:

- ☐ from the outside in
- ☐ from the inside out
- ☐ from the bottom up
- ☐ from the top down
- ☐ from the middle sideways

ASSESSING THE CULTURE

Use the space below to identify key features of the organizations' culture at each level: symbols, norms, and assumptions. Pay particular attention to assumptions that seem to guide peoples' actions and of which they may be unaware. Keep in mind that you may have to do this analysis for different groups or *subcultures* in the organization.

Symbols. What are the distinctive signs and symbols in the organization?

Norms. What are the governing "rules of the game"? What kinds of behaviors are tacitly encouraged and discouraged?

Assumptions. What unarticulated truths does everyone seem to take for granted, for example, about how decisions get made or what is valued?

Onboarding Tool Kit 2010

Appendix B, Tools for the Second 90 Days

SECURING EARLY WINS

Use the space below to describe the first pilot projects you will initiate. Keep in mind that you can have multiple projects addressing issues in each center of gravity, so long as they are synergistic and you don't get spread too thin.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

SURVEYING YOUR ADVICE NETWORK

Fill out the two tables on this page and the top of the next page by doing the following:

A. List your key advisors and counselors, both internal and external.

B. Identify the domains in which each assists you (technical, political, and personal). Check more than one domain if appropriate.

C. Assess the degree to which each relationship helps you become a more effective leader.

Assessing internal advisors and counselors (within your organization)

Advisor/ Counselor	Technical	Political	Personal	Value of Relationship
1.				1 2 3 4 5 Low High
2.				1 2 3 4 5 Low High
3.				1 2 3 4 5 Low High
4.				1 2 3 4 5 Low High
5.				1 2 3 4 5 Low High

Assessing external advisors and counselors (outside your organization)

Advisor/ Counselor	Technical	Political	Personal	Value of Relationship				
1.				1	2	3	4	5
				Low				High
2.				1	2	3	4	5
				Low				High
3.				1	2	3	4	5
				Low				High
4.				1	2	3	4	5
				Low				High
5.				1	2	3	4	5
				Low				High

Now answer the following questions:

My network gives me the support I need to do my job effectively.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Why or why not?

BUILDING YOUR TEAM

Building your team is the most important foundation-building task of your transition. As we have seen. Sticking with the existing team too long is a common mistake. By the end of the transition period you must have decided who will stay and who will go; otherwise you will own the team, warts and all. (For high-visibility positions, you must also have plans in place to help the people you replace make their own transitions without delay).

Focus first on assessing your existing team. Then put on your design hat to think about team composition and team process. (*Composition* refers to who constitutes the team, and *process* refers to how they work together.) Having the right people in the right places isn't enough; they have to be efficient and effective in how they work together.

Assessing your existing team

Rapid, accurate assessments of the existing team are an essential part of your early learning. Unless you are unusually fortunate, you will inherit some good performers, some average performers, and some who aren't up to the job. You will also have to grapple with the politics of the team, including the likelihood that some of its members hoped to get your job. If you come from outside into a realignment or success-sustaining situation, many people will be asking, "Why did he or she get the job?"

Evaluate each member of your existing team on the four key criteria:

- Competence & judgment. Do they have the technical competence, experience, and good judgment to do the job effectively?
- Energy & focus. Do they bring the necessary energy and focus to the job, or are they burned-out or unengaged by the challenges you are facing?
- Relationships. Do they get along with others on the team and support team decision making?
- Trust & integrity. Can you fundamentally trust them to do what they say they will do and to support their commitments?

You should strongly consider replacing any existing team member about whom you answer no to any of these questions.

Making early assessments

Review available performance dates on members of your team, supplemented by appraisals. If the organization performs climate or morale surveys by unit, these will also provide insight.

Meet members of your new team very early on , and carefully observe them both individually and collectively. Depending on your style preferences, initial meetings with your new subordinates may be informal discussions, more formal reviews of their realms, or a combination. It may make sense to undertake structured interviews of the top team, asking suck questions as:

- What do you think of the existing strategy?
- What are the biggest challenges and opportunities?
- What resources could we leverage more effectively?
- What changes would you favor in how the team works together?
- If you were me, what would you be paying attention to?

Assessing individuals. Look at what individuals say and at they don't say. Do they volunteer information or does it have to pulled out of them bit by bit? Do they take responsibility for problems in their jurisdictions or point fingers? Do they seem knowledgeable, trustworthy, and energetic? Do their relationships with other team members appear cordial and productive? What topics seem to elicit strong emotional responses? (Hot buttons provide important clues about motivation and reservoirs of emotional energy that can block or promote needed change.) Are their expressions and body language consistent with their words?

Evaluating consistency. Also assess the consistency of responses within the team. Are their responses too consistent, indicating an agreed-on "party-line"? Or are they so inconsistent as to raise questions about coherence and teamwork? What are the likely implications for your ability to work with the team?

Probing group dynamics. Test your provisional insights and examine relationships and coalitions by observing how the team interacts in early meetings. When one person speaks, others' reactions can say a lot about attitudes, leadership and alliances. While you listen, pay attention to what is going on among the other listeners. Who seems to defer to whom on a given topic? Do some people roll their eyes or otherwise express disagreement or frustration?

Making initial judgments.

The purpose of your early assessments is to arrive at initial judgments-within a couple of months-about the capabilities and futures of members of your existing team. Specifically, you should assign each team member to one of the six categories:

- *Keep in existing position (high-performing)*-currently performing optimally in existing job
- *Keep in existing position (developmental)*-needs development for which time is available
- *Keep but move to a different position*-strong performer but not in ideal position
- *On probation*-watch this person carefully and put in place a personal development plan as soon as possible
- *Don't keep (high priority)*-replace as soon as possible
- *Don't keep (low priority)*-replace in the medium term

Use the table below to assessing your existing team, keeping in mind that these are initial assessments and that you may change your mind.

Individual	Assessment
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Avoiding potential pitfalls

The following rules of thumb will help you avoid common traps when restricting a management team.

Principle 1. **Postpone team building until the core is in place.**

It's tempting to launch team-building activities such as join problem-solving, brainstorming, and visioning early on. New leaders, especially those with a consensus-building style, are understandably eager to tap the insights of their top people. There is a danger, though, of deepening the bonds within a group some of whose members are not going to make it. So it's best to avoid explicit team-building activities until the team you want is in place. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't meet as a group. It means that you should put more emphasis on problem solving and decision making one-on-one or with subgroups of the team who are keepers.

Principle 2. **Try to defer decisions for which team ownership is essential.**

A related mistake is making decisions that should have been deferred until more of your team is in place. Decisions that commit new people to courses of action they had no part in defining are especially undesirable. Of course, you will have to make tough calls early on. But the benefits of moving quickly should be weighed against lost opportunities to solicit insight from new team members and to engender feelings of ownership in them.

Principle 3. **Get help with the restructuring process.**

The process of replacing people is fraught with legal and company-policy pitfalls. This is not something you should undertake on your own. Find out who can advise you on the process and help you to chart strategy. The support of a good human resources person is invaluable early on.

Principle 4. **Move quickly once you have made up your mind.**

When you decide that someone must leave, it's important to move quickly and not prolong the inevitable. Explain the situation to the person and explore options with him or her. Then move on.

***Principle 5*. Strive to preserve the dignity of the people involved**.

Personnel changes must be perceived as fair and respectful of the dignity of the individuals involved. Even if other employees agree that a person should be replaced, your credibility will suffer if your actions are perceived as unfair. If you are to be credited with making appropiate personnel choices, you must be seen as making careful assessments of capabilities and fit. Peoples' opinions often hinge on whether you have sought other options for a well-regarded employee who is ill-suited to a particular job.

DYSFUNCTIONAL CULTURAL PATTERNS

Cultural patterns can standing the way if high performance; some that do are summarized below. Note that an organization can be highly energized but still unfocused and undisciplined. Alternatively, misplaced focus and discipline can come at the expense of an innovative spirit.

Lack of…	Symptoms
Focus	☐ The organization is unable to define its priorities or has too many priorities or has too many priorities. ☐ Resources are rewarded for their ability to put out fires
Discipline	☐ Core processes and key people exhibit wide variations in performance. ☐ Employees don't understand that inconsistency has negative consequences. Failure to meet commitments is excused.
Innovation	☐ Internal benchmarks of performance substitute for a focus on best competitors. ☐ Generation-to-generation progress in products and processes is slow and incremental. ☐ Employees are rewarded for maintaining stable performance and not for pushing the envelope.
Teamwork	☐ Competitiveness is directed internally rather than externally. ☐ Functions vie to protect turf rather than to advance a shared agenda. ☐ People are rewarded for creating fiefdoms.
Sense of Urgency	☐ External and internal customer needs are ignored. ☐ Responsiveness is not seen as an important value. ☐ Complacency is apparent in beliefs like "We're the best and always have been" or "It doesn't matter if we do it right now because it won't make a difference."

To identify aspects of the culture that may be undermining performance, begin with the following questions:

- ☐ Are people capable of sustaining attention, establishing priorities, and marshaling a critical mass of resources to pursue them, or are their efforts diffuse and unfocused?
- ☐ Do key processes and people deliver the necessary performance crisply and consistently, or are wide variations in quality, cost and speed permitted?
- ☐ Is internal competition for turf more vigorous and heartfelt than external competition with other companies?
- ☐ Are innovative products developed and brought to market as nimbly or better than the company's best competitors?
- ☐ Does an appropriate sense of urgency prevail about pursuing priorities and responding to problems?

Diagnosing cultural problems

Use the space below to assess the extent to which the organization suffers from the problems listed above.

Focus. Do people focus appropriately or are they pulled in too many directions?

Discipline. Are plans made and executed reliably?

Innovation. Can the organization innovate as well as execute?

Teamwork. Are competitive energies directed externally or internally?

Urgency. Does an appropriate sense of urgency prevail?

STRUCTURED REFLECTION

The power of structured reflection is enhanced if you pursue it regularly and are attentive to how things change over time. Consider setting aside 15 minutes at the end or beginning of each week to answer the same set of questions. Save your responses so you can look back regularly at the previous couple of weeks'. You will see patterns develop, both in the problems you face and in your reactions to them.

These questions provide a template for reflecting about your first days in your new job. Take some time to think about them and use the space on the next page to summarize your answers.

What do you feel so far?

- On a scale of high to low, do you feel:
- Excited? If not, why? What have you done to block feeling excited?
- Confident? If not, why? What have you done to block feeling confident?
- Do you feel in control of your success? If not, what do you feel you must do to gain control?

What has bothered you so far?

- With whom have you not connected? Why? What did you do to cause that lack of rapport?
- Of the meetings you have attended, which has been most bothersome? Why?
- Of all that you have seen or heard, what has disturbed you most?

What has gone well and poorly?

- Of the interactions you've had, which would you handle differently if you had the chance? Which exceeded your expectations? Why?
- What decisions have you made that turned out particularly well? Not so well? Why?
- Of the main missed opportunities, was a better result blocked primarily by you or something beyond your control?

Meeting the four challenges

- *Learning:* How are you learning? Is the balance appropriate among technical, cultural, and political learning? What are your priorities for learning?
- *Influence:* How are you doing at influencing key groups, internally and externally? What coalitions do you most need to build?
- *Design:* What progress have you made in assessing the strategy and altering it if necessary? In aligning strategy, structure, systems and skills? What are your priorities?
- *Self*-management: Have style issues been a problem so far? If so, what can you do about it? Are you using advice and counsel effectively? What are your priorities for building your advice and counsel network?

Summary of reflections