

ACCELERATE TRANSITION INTO NEW LEADERSHIP ROLES

The first three months are crucial for those moving into new leadership roles because they are more likely to make hasty decisions without the necessary information (to put their “thumb print” on the job). They also are likely to fail to build relationships and credibility sufficient to support decisions or actions. To improve assimilation and effectiveness in new roles, organizations can take pragmatic steps to help new leaders achieve a successful role transition.

The four steps described below combine executive coaching and team development to address two elements that are critical to success in new leadership assignments: **gaining clarity** about the challenges of the new role; and **relationship building** with the new team of direct reports and peers.

1. Outline job tasks and social/relationship priorities that influence transition into the new leadership role. A competent executive coach can be effective in working with the new leader and his/her organizational cohorts to identify needs and expectations.
2. Resulting information is reviewed by the new leader and executive coach. Together they explore the new leader’s reactions to the needs and expectations as expressed by organizational peers and subordinates, and then they prepare for a subsequent team meeting.
3. Relying upon a structured agenda of key topics resulting from the previous step, the new leader and his/her cohort group – usually direct reports – share information about themselves, their expectations within the workplace, and they develop a common understanding around priorities and the means to accomplish them.
4. The executive coach arranges a follow-up meeting approximately one month later to assess the new leader’s learning, progress on the job and evolution of key relationships. A short term leader development plan is formulated to focus continued areas of emphasis. This plan is shared with the new leader’s manager so coaching support can be transitioned to internal resources.

At Vernon Roche and Hodgson we have frequently worked with such transitioning leaders, whether this move is within the same organization or with a new employer. It is a brief intervention/coaching process that is particularly useful when this leader is entering a new organization as unfamiliarity on both sides is high. This mutual uncertainty can temporarily inhibit communication, cooperation and productivity, thus it makes sense to minimize this.

A simple intervention supported by experienced business psychologists like Vernon Roche and Hodgson can work for you. Call us to learn more.