



“Moving into a New Role”

The first few weeks of a new role or job can be an exciting and daunting challenge. Whether it is the job of your dreams, an internal promotion or a lateral move to a different department, you will need to make some adjustments to make sure you succeed and to make the most of the opportunities. DBM has over 40 years of international experience, working with organizations and individuals in career transition and recommends, that as you prepare for the changes ahead, you consider a number of factors to ensure that you “hit the ground running”, when you move into your new role. Don’t wait for your first day – start preparing for your new job now!

Adapt to the organization’s culture

When you move into a new role you need to understand the values and goals of your new organization or department. Many managers fail within the first two years, in a new position because they are unable to adjust to the new role and fail to develop strong relationships which are vital to understand and achieve business objectives.

Through observing people and asking questions you will quickly discover how people in your new organization communicate, think, act and make decisions. Keep an open mind and remember you are the one who will need to make changes. Use what you learn through observation to adapt your style and understand who the key stakeholders are and what their objectives are. For example, a line manager’s goal, may be to focus on growth this year, but the HR Director may be more concerned about long term growth and about high labour turnover, so how you engage and develop team members will be crucial.

Plan & Prepare

The first few weeks in a new role can be a whirlwind of names and information. Think about what you want to achieve by the end of your first day, first week and first month. Gathering information before you start will increase your confidence and knowledge of the organization or department. Save valuable time by completing forms beforehand and provide the organization with your photograph. Understand reporting lines, and the company dress code so that you are ready for your first day. Many companies arrange an induction program to support new employees, take ownership of the program, by preparing for meetings and introductions. An example; a medical representative who joined a Pharmaceutical company sent thank you emails after each introductory meeting to start and build a relationship with his new colleagues. He gathered data from time spent with customers and suppliers and shared his observations with his boss and peers, and linked these back to company goals.

Learning & Development Planner

When you move into a new role there is a mindset change involved, in letting go of the past and changing your behaviour to make sure you succeed in your new role. Being aware of your strengths and development needs will help you consider the changes you will need to make. Strengths as well as development needs can make you vulnerable, every strength also has a potential pitfall. Be aware of the fundamental changes in your new role if you are moving from a technical position to supervising people who a few months earlier were peers. Developing a plan for your transition will help you build on your strengths and put goals in place to work on. Getting a coach or mentor will help you be proactive; to set goals and track your progress.

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Communication Skills

As you meet your new team members and peers, think about the impression you want to leave with them - positive, confident, friendly and helpful. Prepare questions and actively listen during meetings to gather information which you can use to build relationships. Take the time to understand and clarify how your manager prefers to communicate and how he / she likes to make decisions. During initial meetings, find out what resources are available to you and discuss what support you will need to achieve your goals. First impressions are very important, so remember it is not only the words you use but also be aware of your body language and the tone of your voice.

Building Relationships

Building relationships with your key stakeholders should be a key objective in the first few weeks. Spend time developing a network, looking for opportunities to add value and working with your team to achieve some early wins will help establish your credibility and demonstrate your worth to the organization. An example; for one manager it was as simple as increasing the frequency of team meetings and extending information that was shared with peers across functions to improve communication. Being clear about your line manager's expectations and focusing on problems that he / she cares about will help you.

Avoiding Pitfalls

There are several pitfalls to avoid when moving into a new role and the biggest trap many new leaders fall into is to believe they will be successful by doing what made them successful in the past. There is an old saying "to a person who has a hammer everything looks like a nail".

You may have been promoted to supervise people who were once your peers so there maybe some jealousy and watch out for people who may want you to fail. Active listening and observation during initial meetings will give you an insight into internal politics and conflicts.

Summary

The first few weeks of a new job can be an exciting and also a daunting challenge so to avoid the pitfalls take the advise from DBM and make the most of the opportunities. You need to "hit the ground running", so don't wait for your first day – start preparing for your new job now!