

At SP Industries, we believe in preparing our new leaders with all the tools they need to be successful in their roles. A new role comes with new responsibilities, new bosses, new direct reports and new priorities. New leaders face the challenge of learning our new organization while being expected to produce quick results. It is not an easy task. In order to best support our leaders, we have the New Leader Transition Program. This program is for leaders new to the company, leaders taking on new roles or newly promoted leaders.

The New Leader Transition Program is designed to facilitate the entry of leaders into new roles by accelerating the normal process of learning, building credibility and taking charge in a new organization.

The most critical time for new leaders to establish themselves and build influence with key constituents is within the first three months of being in their new position. If they do not make an early impact or garner the support of key stakeholders, the probability of long term success is diminished. The New Leader Transition Guide helps a leader develop and implement a plan for quickly and successfully driving the agenda their new position requires.

This guide is organized by the seven key tasks that a new leader should complete during the first 90 days on the job. The seven key tasks are:

1. Get to Know Your Boss
2. Get to Know Your Employees
3. Get to Know Your Job
4. Get to Know Your Peers and Internal Customers
5. Know Your Leadership Vision
6. Communicate Expectations of Your Employees
7. Build Your Network/Support System

The New Leader Transition Guide also includes additional tips for a transitioning leader.



The act now icon indicates an action is required. Let's get started! 😊

Get to Know Your Boss

Know what your leader's day looks like and how you can make his/her job easier. Become a student of your boss. Know what they like/don't like. Know what's important to them. If you're on time, does that mean you're five minutes late in their eyes? Know what drives them crazy. Interview your boss to create a plan. Don't wait for them to create a plan for you. Create the plan and send it to them for their feedback.



Schedule a one-hour meeting with your boss in a private location. Discuss the following items:

- How do you like to be kept informed on the status of key projects or initiatives?
- What are the ground rules for calling you vs. emailing you?
- Do you have any topics or issues about which you feel strongly that I should know about?
- What are your top priorities? What do you see as the top priorities for my team?
- What key quick wins would you like to see?
- What does your day look like?
- What things can I do to make you successful?
- Do you have any "pet peeves" I should know about?
- How should I expect to receive feedback from you?
- How would you like to receive feedback from me?
- How will I know if my performance is meeting your expectations?

Get to Know Your Employees

Be a student of your people. Know what they're good at/bad at; what's important to them and what their concerns are. Do this by listening and observing. If someone on your team is not pulling their weight, address it, hold them accountable and impose applicable consequences. Everyone's watching to see if you notice and if you'll do something about it. Don't put your head in the sand! Be clear and upfront about roles, responsibilities, expectations and norms. People like structure! Structure + Accountability + Support = Results. Clarify what the results are. Provide structure for accomplishing results. How will you hold your people accountable? How are you going to provide different levels of support that vary by person and by task (be a situational leader)?



Schedule a team meeting with your new team to discuss. Tip! Send a survey in advance to get answers, then use the team meeting to discuss them. You can keep anonymous to get as much feedback as you can. Ask HR for assistance to talk through what may work best for your team.

- What do you already know about me as your new leader?
- What do you not know, but would like to know about me?
- What would you like me to know about the team?
- What are you most proud of?
- What concerns do you have about me joining the group?
- What are the hot issues/problems I should know about now?
- Are there any quick fixes?
- What is the one question you are afraid to ask?
- What do I need to know to be successful in the new role?
- Are there difficult areas of the business that I need to know about?
- What are some ways we can have fun?
- What else should I know?

Get to Know Your Employees, continued



Schedule a one on one meeting with each team member individually to discuss:

- Describe your current job. What do you find most satisfying, challenging and frustrating about your current role?
- What are your key areas of focus or priority?
- What are your goals/objectives for the year?
- What do you consider your greatest accomplishments or areas of contribution?
- What are the greatest barriers you face in performing your job?
- What are your concerns about the department and about me?
- How do you like to be recognized?
- What gets you up in the morning?
- How often should we meet?
- What could I do that would be helpful to you in your job?

Get to Know Your Job

Know your job description and job scope. Know your key responsibility areas. Identify your top five priorities, key problem areas and any quick wins.



Schedule a meeting with your leader. Prior to the meeting:

- List your key areas of responsibility as you see them.
- List your top five priorities.
- Ask your leader to do the same.

During the meeting:

- Share the items that you listed as your main areas of responsibility.
- Ask your leader to share the items he/she listed as your main areas of responsibility.
- Discuss any differences between the two lists. Ask questions and explain the rationale for items being on or off the list.
- Share the items you identified as the top priorities.
- Ask your leader to share the items he/she listed as the top priorities. Make sure you understand what success looks like and what is expected of you for each of the priorities.
- Ask your leader if there are any quick wins you should pursue related to the top priorities.
- Ask your leader what level of responsibility you have for the budget.
- What is the budgeting process?
- What are important dates/timelines when it comes to the budget?
- What items should go to your leader for approval?
- What items can you approve yourself?

Get to Know Your Peers and Internal Customers



Schedule a meeting with your internal customers. For example, internal customers might be the internal leaders whose teams rely on a product or service your team provides.

- Tell me about your area: such as your key strategies, markets, financial results, people and your biggest challenges?
- Currently, what are your most critical priorities?
- What have been your past experiences with and impressions of the area that I am now managing? What is working well, and what is not working well?
- What advice would you give to someone who is new to this organization?
- Do you have any concerns or issues with the products or services provided by the area I manage?
- How can we best work together?



Schedule a similar meeting with your peers.

- Peers are people leaders who report to the same leader as you. Peers can also be internal customers.
- As a result, it may be appropriate to ask your peers the same questions that you ask of your internal customers.
- Peers may also be able to share insight into how your leader likes to communicate and/or strengths and development areas of your team.

Know Your Leadership Point of View

Research has shown that effective leaders have a clear, teachable, leadership point of view and are willing to share it with and teach it to others, particularly for the people they work with. If you can teach people your leadership point of view, they will not only have the benefit of understanding where you're coming from, but they'll also be clear on what you expect from them and what they can expect from you. Establish and communicate your leadership point of view now so that in times of crisis, you and your team have this point of view to fall back on.



In determining your leadership point of view, you should be able to answer these questions:

- Who are the influencers (leaders) in your life who have a positive (or in some cases negative) impact on your life? What did you learn from these people about leadership?
- Think of your purpose. Why are you here and what do you want to accomplish?
- What are your core values that will guide your behavior?
- Given what you've learned from past leaders, your purpose and your core values, what are your beliefs about leading and motivating people?
- What can your people expect from you?
- What do you expect from your employees in terms of how you work together?
- How will you set an example for your people?
- What will your brand be? Your teams brand?
- Prepare to share your leadership vision. Here are some great tips on key leadership attributes to help you create followership and a team that is inspired to deliver results:
 - Clarity of goals and objectives
 - Opportunity- not just in career, but to try new things and gain new skills
 - Involvement- be open to suggestions and create a safe space to share! You never know where the next great idea will come from.
 - Keep commitments- don't blow off those one on ones and meetings because something came up. Keeping all commitments creates loyalty and trust.
 - Consistency- treat everyone the same and exhibit consistent behavior- what they did great today will be perceived as a great job tomorrow.
 - Respect- goes a long way. Ask your team what they think and seek input.

New Leader Transition Guide



- Praise- this is one of the most powerful tools a leader has- use it! Praise a job well done- the payback will be amazing!
- Timely, constructive feedback- share feedback in the moment or shortly thereafter, this way you can avoid costly repeats.
- Stand up for your team- nothing is better than knowing you have a leader who has your back!

Meeting these 10 focus areas will help you create a loyal and productive team.

Communicate Expectations of Your Employees

Set employees up for success by communicating your expectations of them in specific terms. Studies show that a key element in building trust is to eliminate any “gray” area when it comes to employees knowing what you expect of them. The class, “Art of Performance Management” teaches you how to set specific expectations of your employees.



Using the information you get from what you’ve learned so far, take that and share your expectations.

- Review SP Industries Performance Management materials and goals and objectives.
- Consult with HR if necessary.
- Ensure all employees have performance goals and objectives set.
- For each objective, identify HOW you would expect an employee to achieve that objective.
- These behaviors will become the expectations you have of your employees
- In terms of work arrangements, ensure each employee knows what you expect, especially if you work remotely, i.e. meeting cadence, check-ins, and other general expectations.

Build Your Network/Support System

Having a peer network and support system is like having a cadre of consultants there when you need them. Networking helps with problem solving, idea generation and best practice sharing. Studies show it also leads to increased job satisfaction. People are social creatures after all!



Get a mentor.

Take initiative to do this if you are promoted or hired into a management position. You can do this informally right or work with your leader or HR to determine.

Your mentor should be someone at your boss' level or even your boss' boss' level. They should be someone who understands the organization and with whom you have something in common. You initiate it and you drive the mentor relationship, meaning you set up meetings, set the agenda and do the follow up. Discuss this with your leader and ensure you have a plan.



Identify three peers to build relationships with.

They should be people who know what they're doing. Identify an experienced leader who you can go to with questions and/or for advice.

Understand power balance and goal confluence: How much power do you have as a result of your position or your ability to influence others? Goal confluence is the extent to which your goals are aligned with the goals of others. Are there people in the organization whose goals are inclusive or in conflict with yours? You need to know this! Identify your primary goal and all those who you need to help you and who may be working against you.

Complete the Relationship Map. When thinking about the WIIFM, think about what's in it for them and for you. Consider how you regard them. If you see them in a negative light, then they'll know it. Instead, find something positive about them. Know what your assumptions and beliefs are of people and how it impacts how you behave around them.

Build Your Network/Support System, continued

Instructions for Relationship Map:

Field	Description
My Primary Objective	Your big picture goal
Relationship	A person who affects your ability to reach your goal. This person could be helpful, could be ignoring you and you need them, could be working against you, boss, boss' boss, direct report. List anyone who affects your ability to reach your goal.
WIIFM	Stands for What's In It For Me. Answer this from the perspective of the other person in the relationship. What's in it for them to have a relationship with you, to help you reach your goal? Also, what's in it for you to have them helping you?
Stakes	How does it affect this person if you succeed (either in a good way or a bad way)?
Style	How they think, their sense of humor. How might I rub them the wrong way? How will I avoid offending them? Know this know so you can avoid any pitfalls during your first interaction.
Regard	How does this person see you? How do you regard them? Find something positive to think about them.

Top Tips for a Transitioning Leader

When transitioning into a new management position, the first 90 days are crucial. As a new leader, it is your job to get in and take charge. But there is a catch. Delve in too quickly and you run the risk of alienating your team, thus crushing morale and stifling production. Have too much of a “hands-off” approach and you will lose their respect. It is an intricate balancing act that you must do to maintain order and inspire and motivate your team to reach higher. It can be daunting and intimidating, but this program is here to help ensure you are the most successful. These tips can help your transition period run a little more smoothly and make your integration into your new team much easier.

1. Tread Softly - at Least at First - Start Small

When you come into your new position, resist the urge to make a great deal of changes immediately. In fact, sit back and observe. You can implement a few minor changes such as break schedules or routine procedures, but, again, proceed with caution. One crucial mistake that new leaders make is that they delegate the "grunt" jobs to their employees and take the easy tasks for themselves. Never ask your employees to do something that you would not do yourself.

2. Listen

Your employees are on the front line and the ones who hear your customers first hand. They have a feel for what works and what needs to be fixed. You would do yourself a great favor by asking your employees four little words: “What do you think?” Ask them what is working and what needs to be fixed. You can have formal staff meetings where you have your employees submit their comments and recommendations.

3. Keep Open Communication

Your employees are not mind readers and if you are new, they don't know you. Anticipate their concerns and address them before things get out of hand and lead to a disgruntled team. If there is any possible way for you to have a meeting prior to starting to work with your team, by all means, do it. If not, as soon as possible introduce yourself to your team, even if you have to take each member individually and chat with them briefly. You don't have to go into anything lengthy, just get a feel for each team member and allow them to get a feel for you.

Most of all, keep the lines of communication open. Be approachable and don't let your emotions get the best of you. If you ask for honesty and a direct approach, be prepared to get just that. There is no room here for you to get your feelings hurt. Approach your employees, ask them what is on their minds and take their responses into consideration.

4. Make time for employees

Above all, leadership is a *people* job. When an employee needs to talk with you--whatever the reason--make sure that you set aside the time to do so. Put your work aside for a moment, put down your smartphone, and focus on the person standing in front of you.

5. Recognize achievements

Every employee wants to do a good job. And when they do a good job, employees want recognition from their bosses. Unfortunately, few bosses do much in the way of recognizing and rewarding employees for a job well done. The good news is that there are many things bosses can do to recognize employees that cost little or no money, are easy to implement, and that take only a few minutes to accomplish.

6. Think about lasting solutions

No matter how difficult the problem, there is always a quick solution, and leaders are happiest when they are devising solutions to problems. The trouble is that, in our zeal to fix things quickly and move on to the next fire, we often overlook the lasting solution that may take longer to develop. Although it's more fun to be a firefighter, the next time you have a problem to solve in your organization, deal with the *cause* of the problem instead of simply treating the symptoms.

7. Don't take it all too seriously

Without a doubt, running a company is serious business. Products and services must be sold and delivered, and money must be made. Despite the gravity of these responsibilities, successful leaders make their organizations fun places to work. Instead of having employees who look for every possible reason to call in sick or to arrive to work late or go home early, organizations work hard *and* play hard end up with a more loyal, energized workforce.

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