

Jump-Start Worksheet

Overall Goals and Objectives			
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Things to Learn			
People to Meet			
Things to Do			
Deliverables			

Dimensions of Attention

Knowledge & Skills

Doing the basic tasks of the job is what most people focus on when they think about being successful. The key is to start early in a new role. Discover what you most need to learn, from whom, and how you can learn it. Focus on the right mix of technical, cultural, and political learning. And then never stop learning and growing.

Priorities

This is the other dimension that is obvious to most people. As it should be. Work with your manager to identify key goals and pursue them relentlessly. Show continual and visible progress.

Culture

When two or more people come together, they create a third thing, a meta-being, a collective mind. This collective mind has a will, a voice, and a personality all its own. When it is just two people, we call the collective mind “the relationship.” When it is more than two people, we call it “the culture.”

Discover and understand the culture of your organization. Culture is often easiest understood as the attitudes, behaviors, values, and processes that lead to decisions. Understand what fit looks like. Most often, people can adapt to fit in an organization as long as they know what fit looks like.

Many of the tools we use to assess individual personalities are helpful in understanding organizational cultures. For example:

- Inward vs outward focus
- Control vs flexibility
- Task vs people oriented
- Myers-Briggs types

Beware of cultural immune systems. Like biological systems, organizations have immune systems. As you adapt and assimilate in a role — and especially if you are trying to facilitate change — be careful not to trigger an immune response. Deep change happens incrementally. Once activated, a cultural immune system can eject a “foreign body” in a matter of weeks.

Clarity

Organizations thrive when they have a clear sense of purpose. Understand the mission and vision for the team, the department, and the company. It is helpful to understand the answers to the following questions:

- Who are we?
- Why are we here?
- Who do we want to be?
- Where are we?
- Where do we want to go?
- How will we get there?
- Who are our customers?
- What are they hiring us to do?

Leadership Team

If you are in a leadership role, define assessment criteria and evaluate the team you inherited. Move deftly to make necessary changes; find the optimal balance between bringing in outside talent and promoting high-potential leaders within the organization.

Regardless of your role, get to know the leadership of the company. Start with your immediate manager and his/her peers. Introduce yourself. Request informational interviews. Understand the drivers and

constraints of various leaders. Continue meeting and learning about leaders across the organization and up the hierarchy.

Organization

If you are in a leadership role, identify the most important supporting changes you need to make in the talent, structure, and processes of the organization. Put a plan in place for addressing the most pressing organizational challenges.

Regardless of your role, gain an understanding how the organization is structured. What is the hierarchy? How does information flow? How does power and influence flow? What are the interfaces with which you must interact? What are the boundaries between organizations?

Alliances

Build personal credibility and create key alliances. Identify who has influence and power. Understand the politics. For every leader — and every initiative for change — there will be an intricate web of allies, neutrals, and adversaries. Learn how to identify and leverage such relationships.

Early and Continual Wins

Organize the right set of initiatives to secure early wins. Show continual and demonstrable progress. Do not wait 90 days into a new role to begin producing results. Start to produce small, incremental output by the end of the first month, if not earlier. Continue to deliver incremental wins week-in and week-out throughout your career.