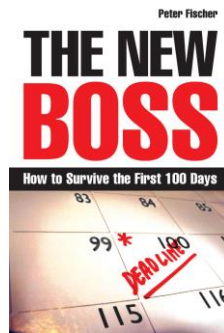


The New Boss: How to Survive the First 100 Days

Author: Dr. Peter Fischer



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Amazon.com Book Review by Mary Chevalier, Attain International

An invaluable on-boarding guidebook and resource for leaders at all levels

This book is ideal for any newly appointed leader. Peter Fischer's approach to Leadership Transitions helps leaders to avoid typical mistakes and pitfalls and to create the foundations for success right from the start.

"The New Boss" is an invaluable on-boarding guidebook and resource for any leader. It gives particular attention to the issues inherent in a variety of challenging on-boarding situations including external hires, international transfers, high potential fast-trackers, change agents and expert / technical types in a leadership role.

Leaders need a strong start, but they also need to carefully manage the pressure for early results and take the time to learn and navigate the new situation. The average tenure for a leadership role is relatively short and mistakes or missteps are more likely early on. A key relationship that gets off to a bad start, for example, can easily cause a setback of many months or even diminish the potential for success in the role. This book begins with the do's and don'ts of successful leadership transitions and is loaded with examples, tools and tips that help leaders to plan, anticipate and manage the issues, challenges and phases of their first 100 Days.

Peter Fischer provides a proven framework and systematic approach to managing leadership transitions and has effectively captured the "soft-side" elements that are missing in other books written on this topic. Additionally, this book offers yet another fresh perspective as Fischer has masterfully captured the challenges and pitfalls in a series of different starting situations that leaders face.

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6 Handel Road, Westerly, RI 02891 USA
Tel: 401.500.3865 Email: mary@attaininternational.com

The New Boss: How to Survive the First 100 Days cont.

In Part One, Fischer outlines seven essential strategies for on-boarding and making a successful leadership transition. In brief, here they are:

1. **MANAGING EXPECTATIONS PROACTIVELY.** Actively seek out and explore the expectations of key constituents. Listen for what is being said, as well as what is unspoken or hidden between the lines. All expectations need to be managed, but it's a mistake to think that all expectations need to be met.
2. **DEVELOPING THE KEY RELATIONSHIPS.** Most changes in leadership run aground on the shoals of key relationships. Develop your power and influence by systematically building an active network of relationships that exists both within and beyond the formal organization chart. Don't let work on your task keep you from investing time in relationships; you will regret it later.
3. **CONSTRUCTIVELY ANALYZING THE INITIAL SITUATION.** Get a clear picture of the situation by modeling it from different perspectives. Clarify your view of the rules and values that govern how people work and behave, the issues occupying the organization, the facts that determine action, the resources you can build on and the available potential for innovation and change. Avoid the trap of trying to understand everything in great detail.
4. **ESTABLISHING A SET OF MOTIVATING GOALS.** The idea is to formulate a set of goals that employees will find convincing. To generate a positive climate for change, paint a picture of the future, represent the various stakeholder perspectives, respect the past accomplishments and ensure a balance between change and stability. The big, ugly long-standing problem is the wrong place to start.
5. **FOSTERING A POSITIVE CLIMATE FOR CHANGE.** Plough the ground before sowing. Show recognition through questions and foster the willingness to adopt other points of view. Rather than asking about problems, prompt people to describe precisely how everything works. Welcome expressions of skepticism; they contain valuable clues to possible obstacles.
6. **INITIATING CHANGES EFFECTIVELY.** Send strong, clear signals for change being mindful that it's important to communicate at an objective as well as an emotional level. Engage people in the first action steps and adopt a strategy of small wins and large gains to build trust and momentum. No change process runs without encountering obstacles, so be prepared to address them.
7. **USING SYMBOLS AND RITUALS.** Symbolic language is powerful. Symbols and rituals have the fascinating property of speaking to people in an emotional and therefore much more inclusive way than purely "objective" communication. Use them to communicate basic values, establish standpoints and underline important messages, establish credibility and initiate change.

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The New Boss: How to Survive the First 100 Days cont.

Part Two of Fischer's book includes seven case studies that depict various leadership transition scenarios, the typical problems encountered and how to effectively deal with them. The following situations are covered: the internal promotion, the external hire, the glorified predecessor, the young, high-potential manager, the long, drawn-out start, the assignment abroad and the headquarters assignment.

Bottom line: "The New Boss" is essential reading for any leader in transition. We provide this book in every On-boarding / Leadership Transition Coaching that we do.

Mary Chevalier, Executive Coach
Attain International
Change and Transition Management Specialists

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Tel: 401.500.3865 Email: mary@attaininternational.com