

## Common Leader-in-Transition Pitfalls

### Objective:

To enhance awareness of typical transition derailers, so that you can anticipate and mitigate them before they negatively impact you.

### Action:

Reflect on the list below: Which of these pitfalls could apply most to you?  
Ask your Executive Sponsor to do the same. How will you integrate these insights into your transition action plan and feedback strategies?

**Coaching Tip:** Review this list with your boss every 3 months your first year to solicit feedback & make sure you're keeping your eye on potential threats.

#### Ineffective management of boss relationship

- Inadequate early & detailed discussion of role expectations, cultural expectations & potential minefields
- Unrealistic expectations by either the new boss or the new leader
- Lack of a systematic transition plan mutually created by boss and new leader
- Lack of communication, quality time and support from boss leaving new leader to fend for him/her self
- Lack of executive sponsorship to create support systems and political advocacy

#### Ineffective management of stakeholder relationships

- Poor first impression; clashes; damaged rapport with key senior management or other key stakeholders
- Lack of time & attention given to understanding the needs & priorities of key stakeholders
- Lack of attention to understanding history, political dynamics & informal networks of key stakeholders
- Failure to build coalitions quickly enough, or with the most critical stakeholders

#### Insufficient attention to direct report assessment

- Delay in assessing and aligning the talent of the existing direct report team with the needs of the business

#### Insufficient information gathering & assessment / act too quickly

- Lack of quality information sought as soon as the job offer is accepted
- Arrive the first day with “the answer” to the organization’s challenges already assumed
- Misread the culture and do not adjust leadership style enough – out of sync
- Excessive time demands; fail to manage stakeholder expectations – try to be instant “hero” to everyone
- Lay out a strategic plan too soon before testing early perceptions & agendas
- Make major decisions and changes too quickly without adequate due diligence & understanding
- Start too many projects at one time – push change faster than the people can absorb it

#### Insufficient communication strategy

- Lack of a consistent communication strategy addressing all key stakeholder groups throughout first year

#### Lack of self awareness / insufficient shift to demands of new role

- Overuse past success strategies that are not as useable or effective in new environment
- Go-it-alone style; reluctance to seek feedback and input
- Over reliance on strengths to the point of liability
- Inaccurate assessment of vulnerabilities; lack of attention to liabilities