

7 Empowering Strategies for Leaders Transitioning to New Roles

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In the dynamic world of work, more than 50 million workers made a bold move in 2022, breaking records by quitting their jobs for better opportunities amid a hot labor market. Even in the face of economic concerns in 2023, numerous executives stepped away from their long-tenured positions to embrace fresh challenges and greater growth.

As a leadership coach and founder of LEAD+VISION, I specialize in fostering unshakable inner confidence and cultivating high-performing team cultures through vision-based coaching. Throughout 2023, a recurring theme in my coaching practice was preparing executives for successful job transitions.

Leaving a familiar, long-tenured job can feel like an overwhelming decision. Rebuilding strong relationships with peers and management, understanding new success metrics, fostering a high-performing team and upholding a reputable leadership image become crucial goals upon joining a new company. It's natural for impostor syndrome to rear its head, whispering doubts like, "What has gotten me here may not get me there."

But fret not! Armed with the right strategies, you can navigate this change with unwavering confidence and ignite success at every turn. Join me as we delve into seven empowering strategies to help you shine in your new senior executive role:

1. Align expectations for success: Setting the foundation

First, sit down with your manager and clarify what success looks like in the next 6-12 months. Understand the key performance indicators (KPIs) and company goals. This alignment sets the stage for you to lead effectively, with a clear vision of what's expected without getting lost in the noise of the daily business. Here are some guiding questions that can help during your first kick-off meeting:

- What would success look like for you related to my team in the next six and 12 months?
- What are the team's current goals and objectives, and how are they aligned with the company strategy?
- How is my team's performance measured currently, and what are the key performance indicators or metrics that are used?
- What are the team's biggest challenges or pain points from your perspective, and how can we work together to address them?

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2. Listen actively, grow exponentially

Embrace the power of listening – a skill often underestimated. As you step into your new role, silence that inner critique trying to prove your worth, a fear-driven act I often observe with leaders in transition. Instead, tune in to your employees, peers, management team and cross-functional teams. Every individual's insight is a puzzle that builds a complete picture of your new organization. It's not about you but how well you can orchestrate information and action between these

stakeholders.

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3. Start collecting data and notice patterns

Listening is not enough; you need to gather data systematically. Keep track of feedback, suggestions and observations from various interactions. Look for response patterns and trends to identify common themes, challenges and opportunities. This data-driven approach will help you make informed decisions as you progress. You are the orchestrator of information without bias coming in with a fresh set of eyes, able to steer the ship in the right direction.

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4. Create a 30, 60, 90 and 180-Day plan

A well-structured plan is your compass for success. Break down your goals into manageable milestones for the first 30, 60, 90 and 180 days. This will keep you focused, organized and motivated, ensuring steady progress and measurable achievements.

5. Own your experience and leverage your strengths

Acknowledge the unique experience and skills you bring to the table. Embrace your expertise and use it to your advantage. At the same time, be open to learning from your new environment.

Cultivate a growth mindset, constantly seeking opportunities to develop personally and professionally.

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6. Communicate transparently and clearly

Clear and transparent communication is the lifeblood of a thriving organization. As a senior executive, your words carry weight, and as the new leader in an organization, building trust with your team and peers is the foundation for your success. Be honest, open and approachable. Keep your team informed about your learnings, progress, newly formed vision and any changes. Transparent communication fosters trust, camaraderie and a shared sense of purpose. It also empowers your team to challenge your assumptions and help build a high-performing team culture.

7. Create a development plan and hire a leadership coach

Hiring a leadership coach during your transition can be among the most rewarding and empowering investments. The right coach can ask you powerful questions to observe your thoughts and guide you with a broad toolkit of best practices to confidently develop yourself and your team.

Ensure that your leadership coach has real-life business experience and can simultaneously act as a coach and mentor. Identify areas where you have room to grow and develop. It's natural to have some gaps in your skills or knowledge. Don't shy away from them or pretend to know, fearing being perceived as incompetent; instead, create a development plan. Seek learning opportunities within the organization, workshops, or

mentoring to bridge those gaps actively. Find a work buddy, a long-tenured peer or executive, who can be the conduit for institutional knowledge, best practices or translator for challenges. Leverage your team's expertise to fill in your gaps until you build enough confidence and learn.

Stepping into a new role can be both stimulating and challenging. Embrace the opportunities that come with change, and remember that growth happens outside your comfort zone. Trust yourself, trust your team and trust the process. You will thrive in your new role by aligning expectations, actively listening, collecting data, creating a plan, owning your experience, communicating transparently and developing yourself.

As you embark on this transformative journey, remember you are not alone. Every great leader faces new challenges and uncertainties. But with these strategies in your toolkit, you are equipped to soar to new heights. Embrace the possibilities, inspire your team and lead confidently.

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