TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

HR’s Role in New Executive Success

HR TOMORROW 2015
Carlson School of Management
April 17, 2015
AGENDA & OUTCOME

- Why executive transitions succeed and fail
- Why it’s important to an organization
- What you can do to improve the probability of success
INTRODUCING MIKE MEYER

Professional
- Sr. Executive Coach
- Ecolab EVP HR
- Cardiovascular Device GM
- Lived / Worked in 50 Countries

Personal
- Married 33 years
- 2 Adult Kids

Passions
- Launching/On-boarding New Executives
- Bicycling
- Downhill Skiing
- Writing

Community / Boards
- Nature Conservancy
- Minnesota International Center
- Orange Tree
INTRODUCTIONS EXERCISE

- Pair up with the person next to you
- 2 minutes each
- This individual will be your partner for a couple of later exercises
BY THE WAY, WHO IS THIS?

JANUS

Roman God of Transitions
(and source of the word January)
EXECUTIVE TRANSITIONS

Within 18 months
• 60% are successful
• 40% fail

“Many stars underperform when they join new companies.”

Boris Groysberg, Harvard Business School
“Getting the right person hired is the starting line, not the finish line.”

Greig Schneider, Egon Zehnder
$COSTS\ OF\ FAILURE$ 

Money 
- Search Fees (x2) 
- Relocation 
- Severance / Exit 
- Business Performance 

$MILLIONS$ 

Organizational 
- Key Vacancy 
- Assimilation / Ramp-up 
- Organizational Reputation 
- Employee Morale
THE PRIZE!

ACCELERATED

TYPICAL

Break Even

Break Even

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 months
“Thank you for calling the Coast Guard help line. To sink, press one. To swim, press two…”
EXERCISE

Talk to your neighbor about a transition you made
(3 minutes each)

☐ What went well

☐ What didn’t go as well as you wanted
WHY GO OUTSIDE?

**TURNAROUND**  Fix a big problem (created by the hiring manager)

**PERSPECTIVE**  Fresh eyes (or fresh meat?)

**SUCCESSION**  No internals can do the job (and we’ll prove it to you!)

**SKILLS**  No internals want the job (failure is only option)
THE POINT IS...

**BOTH** the Organization and the Executive must **OWN** the Transition and Have a **PLAN** for Success
THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

1 - Good hires fail because of “SOFT INTERSECTIONS”

2 - There are methods to at least diminish this “madness”

3 - Start strong and build from there
EXERCISE

Talk to your partner about a transition you witnessed that either went well or didn’t go well.

Explain why (3 minutes each)
COMMON NEW EXECUTIVE DERRAILERS

Smartest person in room

Saving them from themselves

People pleaser

Moving too quickly or slowly
COMMON NEW EXECUTIVE DERAILERS

Not building relationships

Trash the past

Misdiagnose situation

Not in sync with boss
COMPANY DERAILERS

- Unclear expectations
- Wildly optimistic expectations
- Team “just needs leadership”
- Sink or swim approach to assimilation
- Don’t provide promised resources (world changes)
- Boss not engaged
- No early feedback / Mid-course corrections
- Ignore culture fit - focus on “hard” skills
WHAT MAKES IT GO WELL?

BEFORE HIRE

• Tight selection process
• Clear expectations before hire
• Thorough assessment

BEFORE START

• Learn business & people plan
• Pave the way for relationships
• Take care of “physical needs”

AFTER START

• Build strong relationships
• Accurately assess situation – STARS
• Early wins
• In sync with boss
• Team assessment, reorganization, and building
• Set long-term direction
HR ACTIONS FOR A FAST START

- Plan for learning business
- Relationship building map
- Early feedback
- Facilitate alignment with boss
- Team assessment
- Help with focus and priorities: early wins & long term direction
LEARN THE BUSINESS PLAN

DESCRIPTION
Systematic process to learn business

OUTCOME
Thorough understanding of effectiveness, history, positioning, vision, strategy and culture

KEY ACTIONS
- Identify / provide hard data:
  plans, reports, strategies, media, personnel data
- Identify sources of “softer” data:
  customers, distributors, suppliers, culture, employees, “historians”, employee survey data, focus groups, site tours
- Understanding of organizational culture:
  assumptions, land mines, decision making credibility
- Find a sounding board
 EARLY FEEDBACK

**DESCRIPTION**
Provide style & progress feedback three times in first 6 months

**OUTCOME**
Executive understands impact of style and makes early adjustments

**KEY ACTIONS**
- Facilitate boss review at 3-4 months
- Do “mini” 360 interviews with boss, peers, reports
- Real time feedback on potential land mines / sensitive areas
“MINI” 360 INTERVIEWS

Complete at 4 - 6 months

Assure confidentiality

Interview boss, peers, direct reports, others

Produce “themes” report

Assimilation
- Assessment
- Relationships
- Landmines & blind spots
- Speed

Business Challenges
- Key business challenges
- Top priorities
- “STARS” assessment
- Biggest impact areas

Culture
- Describe
- How are decisions made
- Degree of alignment with Leader

Development
- Leadership style & fit
- Strengths
- Development areas
- Start- Stop - Continue

Business Challenges

Assimilation

Culture

Development
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

**DESCRIPTION**
Plan to build relationships with key internal & external stakeholders

**OUTCOME**
Strong start to establishing trusting, productive & energizing work relationships

**KEY ACTIONS**
- Key stakeholder relationship map & plan
- Introductions from boss and others
RELATIONSHIP MAP (INTERNALS)

Identification
- Influencers
- Decision Makers
- Resource Controllers
- Information Controllers
- Immediate Circle
- Culture Guides

Assessments
- Supporters
- Resistors
- Convincibles
- Historians
- Navigators

Meetings
- Initial Meeting
- Cadence
- Social / Informal
- Transactional
ALIGNMENT WITH BOSS

DESCRIPTION
Negotiate expectations, resources and success measures

OUTCOME
Productive working relationship with the second most important person in your life!

KEY ACTIONS
- Facilitate “Five Conversations” join up
- Ensure feedback occurs
BOSS MANAGEMENT BASICS

- Be visible
- No surprises
- Bring problems & solutions
- Don’t try to change the boss
- Don’t criticize your predecessor
- OWN the relationship’s success
- Clarify expectations & priorities
THE FIVE CONVERSATIONS

**Situation**
- How does boss assess situation (STARS)
- How did we get here

**Expectations**
- Understand and negotiate expectations
- Short-term priorities
- Definition of success

**Style**
- Communication style & approach
- Decision making involvement

**Resources**
- Negotiation for critical resources
- Need boss’ help

**Personal Development**
- What to get from current role
- Feedback
- Development Actions
STARS MODEL

S
Start-up

S
Sustain Success

T
Turnaround

A
Accelerate

R
Realignment
STARS MODEL

Start-up –
• Limited resources
• Build from scratch
• New Team

Turnaround –
• Quick & decisive leadership
• Team morale/change
• Acceptance of need for change

Accelerate Growth –
• Put structure & process in place
• Stretch team
• Keep focus/priorities

Sustain Success –
• Don’t screw it up!
• Strong team, good prospects
• Shadow of past leader/actions

Realignment –
• Need to sell change
• Refocus organization
• Some strengths to build on
TEAM ASSESSMENT / ASSIMILATION

**DESCRIPTION**
- Rapidly engage high performing senior team

**OUTCOME**
- Assessing team structure, members and capability
- Build relationships with team and set expectations
- Retaining top people

**KEY ACTIONS**
- New leader assimilation exercise
- Review organization structure, performance assessments & succession plan data
- Put in place clear goals, processes, initiatives
- HR should be the enabler, not the obstacle
NEW LEADER ASSIMILATION PROCESS

1. Half Day Meeting of Leader and Team, Week 1 or 2
   - Introductions
   - Ice Breaker

2. Leader Leaves Room, Team Flip Charts
   - Expectations of Leader
   - What we want to know: style, priorities, etc.
   - What we want leader to know: strength, weaknesses, concerns
   - Burning issues and major obstacles

3. All Reconvene
   - Discuss responses to #2
   - Implications
   - Questions from Leader - Clarify and Learn
PEOPLE MAP CHECKLIST

- Name
- Position
- Tenure - Company and Position
- Major Value to Company
- Unique strengths - skills, knowledge, contacts, personality, customers, etc.
- Key contributions
- Development interests
- Development needs
- Personal
TIPS FOR EXECUTIVES
“BAKER’S DOZEN”

1. Don’t trash the past; honor it
2. You need to adjust to your boss, not vice versa
3. Think fast, but act thoughtfully (unless the platform is truly on fire)
4. Develop a “personal board” of advisors
5. Who first, then what
6. Not a strategic plan, set a strategic process or agenda
7. Get some early wins (that matter to your boss)
8. Focus on 3 priorities
9. Communicate early and establish a regular cadence and routine
10. Culture eats strategy for breakfast
11. Listen and learn as much as you can
12. Have a 1 - 3 - 6 month plan
13. (Your Idea Here!)
TOOLS FOR HR

Send me an email (or give me a business card) to receive these tools

Mike@MikeMeyerPartners.COM
GREAT READS

The First 90 Days
- Critical Success Strategies for New Leaders at All Levels,
  *Michael D. Watkins*

Your Next Move
- The Leader's Guide to Navigating Major Career Transitions,
  *Michael D. Watkins*

You’re in Change - Now What?
- The 8 Point Plan,
  *Thomas J. Neff and James M. Citron*
JANUS WANTS YOU!
THANK YOU!

[Signature: Mike]