



Tips for a Smooth Transition

When You Become the Boss

You have been promoted and are finally in management. You're pleased, but you're also concerned about your relationships with former peers. You were promoted over your friends and now have to supervise them. Below are some common concerns and solutions for you as a new boss.

Common Concerns

You're trying to adjust to having your former bosses as peers and wondering if you can demonstrate to your former co-workers that you deserved the promotion without appearing to brag about it. You're stressed by all you have to learn and wonder if you can handle the new job. Change is hard and time will help you turn some of your concerns into solutions.

Solutions

Your job has changed and you need to, also. Don't feel you should know the answers the first week. Learn who to trust and begin to show that trust. Make a list of questions and ask a veteran employee to help you. By listening and observing, you may be offered valuable answers to your questions.

Don't overplay humility. Someone thought you were capable of the job and you should be able to demonstrate confidence without appearing smug.

As you get comfortable in your new role and show that you're a hard worker with good ideas, you'll earn the respect of your bosses and coworkers. Keep suggestions for major changes until you have built a trust that your ideas are solid.

To keep from getting overwhelmed, make lists of small goals. You may need to put in some overtime until you get



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comfortable in your new position. Try to simplify your personal life so you can invest energy in your situation at work.

Be careful not to use your job to favor friends or to punish enemies. You should base all of your decisions with regard to your staff on work performance. Management consultants don't agree on how to treat former peers. Some feel you need to break socially with former peers because it makes supervision difficult. Others feel that breaking off relationships will show disloyalty and will make for low morale within your new staff. The answer for you probably lies somewhere in between. You want to remain caring and friendly, but your level of intimacy will need to change. It's best to follow your own style and personality.

Learn what you can about your predecessor. It will help you judge where your job is, and will also give you ideas on where to take it. Recognizing your predecessor's strengths and limitations will help you decide which policies to continue and which to change.

Other Steps to Take

If you feel you're not adjusting to your new position after two or three months, you'll need additional support. You can start with your boss, but also seek help in personnel or your employee assistance program.

Seek help when learning your new job and take time to understand the department before you make sweeping changes. This way you'll earn the respect of your boss and staff. Ask for your employees' support and show that you value and respect them, too. By offering sincere praise and setting departmental goals that build cohesiveness, your staff will know that they're important to you and your company.