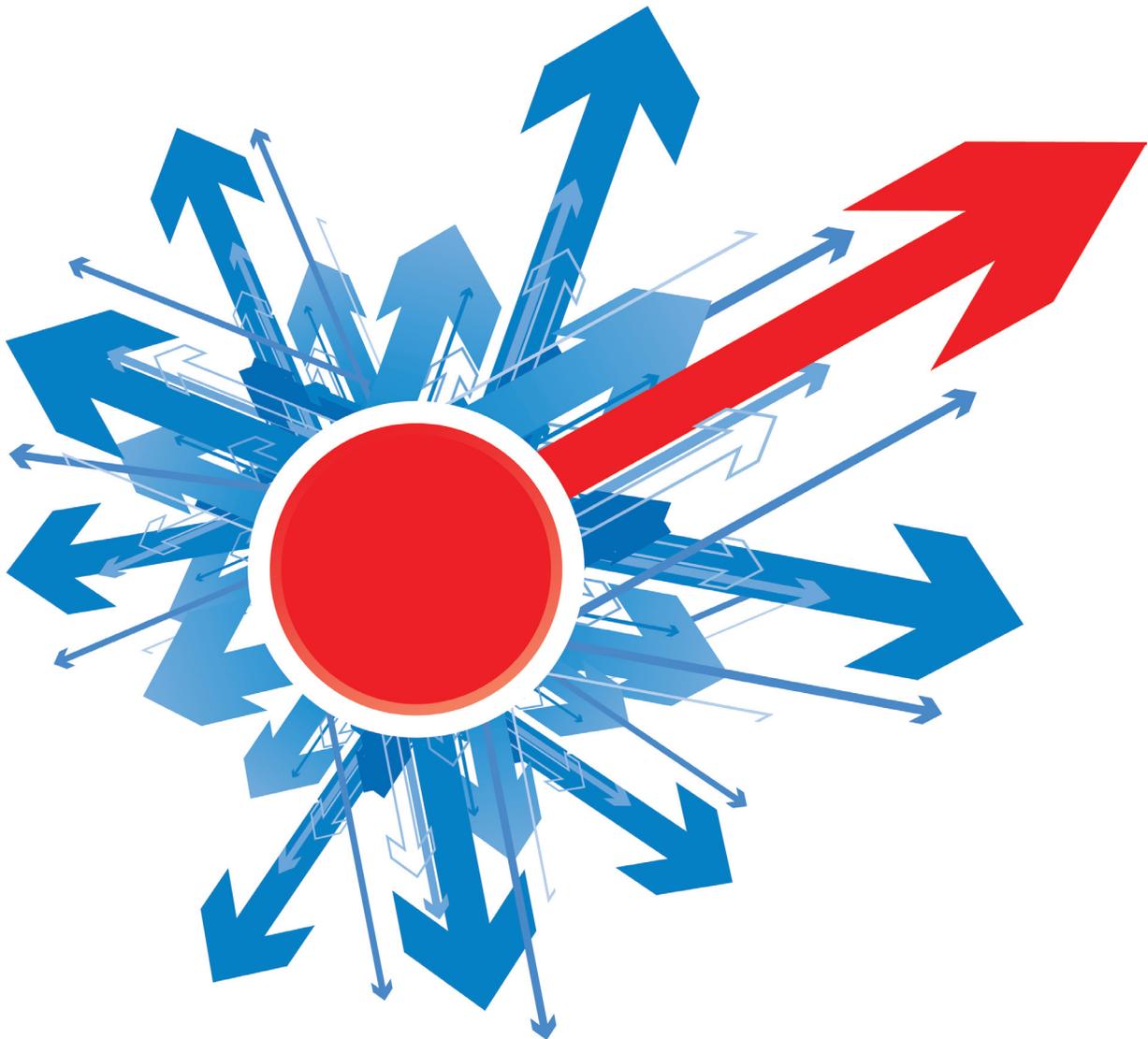


# A Change for the Better:

## 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Ways to Transition to Excellence in Your New Position

BY CRAIG W. ROSS



**DEDICATED**  
to leaders who know tomorrow can be better than today –  
and take action to make it so.

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# INTRODUCTION

What's changing: Your job – or you?

This Verus *QuickRead* is for those who are determined to be even better as people and leaders in their new job. (Or for those who want to press the “reset” button in their current job.)

Most people, of course, when they transition to a new job, function from the paradigm that they are only changing roles, responsibilities, or work environments. In short, their job is changing. This passive approach means they miss a tremendous opportunity for achieving excellence: Transitions are key moments in a career (really, a life) to accelerate momentum, achieve [best ever](#) levels of performance, build enhanced capability, to serve more, do more, *be more*.

And it's free. Every transition is a natural resource, full of situations that present themselves along the spectrum of change, just waiting to be seized and leveraged. To ignore these gifts is to know that years from now your life will be much the same as it is now. (“I wonder what would have happened if . . .”) To realize and activate the potential inherent in the course ahead of you is to guarantee you will find yourself stronger, faster, wiser, and more capable of making the difference you desire.

Even if you are exceptional at what you do, as you move into your new role, what is the cost to you, your family, your new peers, and your organization if you stay the same? Any vision that forfeits or limits the potential within you or others denies the rest of us the experience of what could be.

This is your chance to make a change for the better.

When someone takes a new role or job, this is what often happens: A good-bye party is thrown (or maybe not), boxes are packed, a logistical blur transpires . . . handshakes are made, a “welcome” celebration transpires (or maybe not), and months later the person has a new name badge.

But is the person new? Is the person better than he or she was in the former role?

This Verus *QuickRead* is not about the “first 100 days” on your new job. Nor is it about how to “win friends and influence people.” (Those timeless principles, however, often still apply.) It's about this: Being purposeful and disciplined in ensuring you become even better as you move from one job to the next. It's about leveraging a free resource – all the elements involved in a job change – to deliver your best ever performance in your new employment.

These 10½ best practices have been collected over 20 years of working with middle and senior leaders in numerous industries as they leave familiar territory for the unknown. We've seen managers make mistakes you don't have to make. As well, we've observed executives do deliberate and remarkable things that change results for the better – both for themselves and those they're responsible for leading.

It begins with a question: What will happen when you become 10% better in your new role compared to your last? Use these 10½ best practices . . . and your former boss will wish you'd never left.

“Always the beautiful answer who asks  
a more beautiful question.”

- e.e. cummings

## BEST PRACTICE #1:

### Determine Your Identity as a Leader . . . by Asking More Beautiful Questions

The day you decided to leave your old position is the day your new job began. Since that time, you've been living out a vision of what your work in the future will look like.

This may be the most important question people in transition can ask themselves: *Who do I want to be in my new role?*

Your identity, how people will see and experience you – how you will know yourself – will determine:

- Your thoughts . . .
- That will drive your beliefs, your ideas, and your attitudes . . .
- That will decide your actions.

Most people allow their identity to be formed by default. Like a computer that always sets itself to predetermined settings, these people move from one experience in life to the next seeing life and their work the same way, responding to events just as they always have, and being *the same person*. This isn't to imply that who a person has been in the past is bad. It simply means that by being purposeful now, people can immediately thrust themselves to new levels of effectiveness.

Who we are now is not who we can become. Every interaction of every day is an opportunity to purposefully create an identity that reveals the more authentic you, to create a learned and greater approach to leadership that serves you, others, and the organization you work for.

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

The future is nothing but opportunities. The answer to what tomorrow holds is created. And, as e.e. cummings reminds us, "Always the beautiful answer (tomorrow) who asks a more beautiful question (today)."

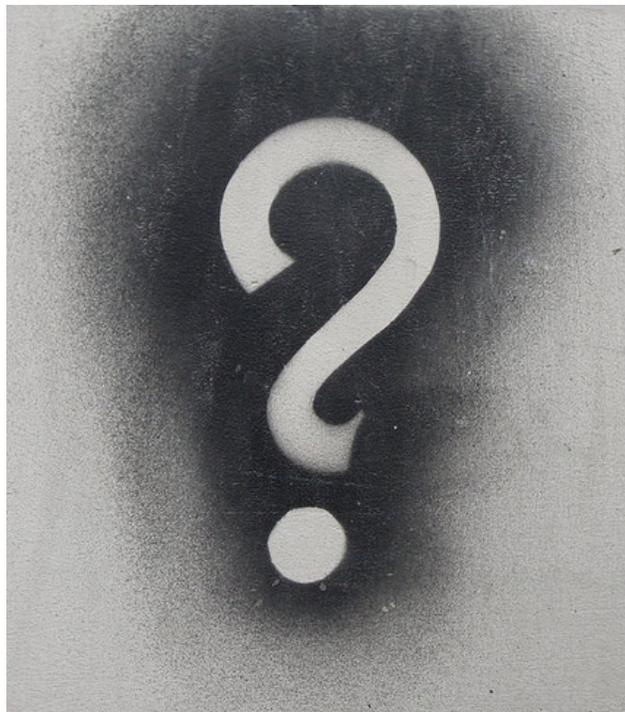


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Here are a dozen **Identity Questions** to ensure we move from a default vision of ourselves and craft a more beautiful identity moving forward:

1. What are some of your proudest accomplishments in the position you're leaving?
2. How did you grow as a leader in the past that will serve you in your next role? And how will you ensure you leverage this identified wisdom?
3. What values do you live and lead from that make an important difference?
4. If you went back in time and began your former job now, what would you do more of, better, or differently?
5. How will you apply what you identified in #4 as you move forward? What difference will that make?
6. What are qualities you want to express more of in your next step as a leader? And why are those important?
7. What makes your heart happiest? And what will you do to ensure your new responsibilities are aligned with these elements?
8. What inspires you as a leader? And how will you keep that consistently in front of you?
9. What life and leadership experiences do you want to have more of in your new position?
10. How do you want to be known and perceived by others? And in what ways is that consistent with who you are naturally?
11. How will you intentionally stretch in your new position to ensure that you grow as a leader?
12. What's your plan to make certain you deliver on your targeted growth identified in #11?

## What's Possible?

My mother is a tremendous inspiration to many people. She's a lifelong learner: At age 78 she continues to study and develop herself. She did the same when I was a kid. I laugh as I realize that she didn't devote herself to "continuous improvement" so she could be the best mom in the neighborhood. She leverages every interaction and moment for the pure joy of discovery, of realizing something new and powerful that takes her beyond the limits of yesterday.

Who will you be a year from now? This transition – today – sets the fertile ground for that discovery.

## BEST PRACTICE #2:

### Create the Habits of Tomorrow by Establishing Today's Routines

"I made a mistake," she told me. "When I got this new job there was so much to do that I decided to work endless hours to get things up to speed. Plus, I wanted to make a good first impression.

"I figured that once I got things where they needed to be *then* I'd come up for air and establish a healthier approach."

This leader with 25+ years of experience looked at me and shrugged. "But things never got up to speed. I've been in this position for two years and I've found myself right back where I was in my old job: exhausted, frustrated, and increasingly unfulfilled."

The illusion of "I'll-get-all-my-work-done-and-then-rest" mesmerizes millions of people. Because, of course, the more you work the more opportunities you create. And to be sure, opportunities are a good thing; how we navigate them remains a differentiator among peers.

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

Today's routines are tomorrow's habits in their youth. It's inspiring to observe successful leaders relentlessly practice routines that are good for them. Instead of waiting to act until we're under the day-to-day pressures of our new job, we can use this transition period to establish routines that will grow into healthy and productive habits. This has significant outcomes, including: When you show up for your new job, your coworkers will observe your new routines and assume this is who you are *naturally*.

More importantly, you will know yourself as a disciplined person because you will have created today's habits with yesterday's routines.

Establish and practice routines now by addressing the priorities in your life with questions such as these:

1. What time of day will I exercise?
2. What type of diet will I evolve to?
3. At what time will I get out of bed – and what will be the first thing I do?
4. What will be the earliest point in the morning that I will check email?
5. How do I want to greet my family members at the beginning of the day?
6. How do I want to engage with loved ones the moment I walk in our home?
7. And why are all these actions important to me?

Bonus: It's a crime that millions of professionals work so hard – and only leave their "leftovers" for their families. In many of our programs we introduce a powerful tool that ensures leaders are the best they can ever be the moment they get home. Consider using the [Homeward Bound Framework](#) daily to establish a powerful habit of "balance."

### What's Possible?

This isn't a recommendation that you reinvent who you are. That's not necessary. (Plus, it requires a lot of energy.) Instead, every transition – indeed, every moment – presents us with an opportunity to be a greater expression of who we truly are. We realize and activate our greatest potential through deliberate actions. What beliefs will people form about you in those critical first days as they engage with you? What values and qualities will you demonstrate when you arrive at your new job?



[Photo by discoodoni on Flickr.](#)

## **BEST PRACTICE #3: Ensure Your Promises Inspire Rather Than Backfire**

It's one of the most common mistakes: A leader proclaims, "I'm going to personally visit every employee on the team in my first six months on the job." This is a good intention, of course. But it leaves everyone watching and checking "Who did she visit first? And why hasn't she visited me yet?"

Invariably business demands alter schedules, which means not everyone got a leadership visit in the first six months. This results in the dreaded "she's-not-a-person-of-her-word" conclusion.

### **Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence**

Promise your character. Promise your values. Promise your mindset. And be selective when promising actions or tasks that can backfire due to conditions you can't control. (Imagine that instead of disappointment, you inspire: "She's amazing. Do you know she visited each of us in her first six months?")

Consider these messages and conversations early:

1. State what values and traits of character are important to you – and why. It's particularly powerful when these are explicitly relevant to business objectives.
2. Share with others your vision for what's possible, with an emphasis on the mindsets and behaviors necessary to get there.
3. Rather than retelling stories that remind people of where you've been (tales they'll grow tired of quickly), ask others to tell you stories of how they got to where they are.

### **What's Possible?**

What your new team *experiences* with you is more powerful than what they are told. Words and promises do not demonstrate commitment, actions do. What is your plan to walk the talk . . . instead of talking the talk?



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## **BEST PRACTICE #4:** Generate Momentum the Moment You Say “Hello, my name is . . .”

It’s well documented that leaders in new positions should deliver early wins. These acts create needed momentum. Still, what if some leaders are unknowingly sabotaging momentum? It happens more often than many realize.

When taking a new position, there’s a single question many leaders ask that often diminishes the potential within their new team. It’s this question: “What’s not working here?” (Variations: Where are our problem areas? What difficulties are you experiencing? Etc.)

Of course, most leaders are savvy enough not to start with that question. They intuitively know that if they start there it won’t make a good impression, so the first question they ask is: “What’s working here?”

This one-two question formula, 1) What’s working here? and then 2) What’s not working?, has an unintended but clear affect: Most people naturally spend most of their time focusing on and talking about *what’s not working*. And there’s a good chance there’s a lot that’s not working. (There’s a good chance that’s why they brought you in.)

Maybe you’ve experienced it. After the second question is asked, there’s momentary silence. Slowly a team member raises his hand and says, “We don’t have enough resources . . .” And the new boss smiles and acknowledges the feedback, thinking that she’s smart to have asked a question that engages people. But then craziness ensues: The slippery slope of blame, victim mentality, whining, and complaining soon sucks the entire team far below the level of inspiration the leader hoped to accomplish.

Because anyone in a new role wants to make a difference as quickly as possible, it’s an easy mistake. We want to know how to help and where our leadership is needed. There is, though, a more effective way to get the same information and ensure that momentum is developed, too. All that’s required is asking a different *second* question, such as, “What are our next steps here?” (Variations: Where do you see opportunities for improvement? If you could step beyond any issue, what would it be? Etc.)

This approach, detailed in our book [Degrees of Strength](#), identifies and leverages the strengths that exist in every experience and situation. [Forward Focus Questions](#), like those just identified, solicit the same information as “What’s not working?” but have a dramatically different effect: Blame is replaced with responsibility; problems give way to solutions; and inertia moves to acceleration.

## Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

Here are five go-to questions you can use in any situation, especially with new teams, where you are seeking to develop increased and sustained momentum:

1. What’s working in this area?
2. How have you created these successes?
3. What objectives do we have now?
4. Why is achieving those objectives important?
5. What’s your plan to achieve your objectives?

(Note: These five questions comprise one of our popular tools delivered in some of our Verus Global workshops, The [Recipe for Partnership](#).)

## What’s Possible?

Leaders don’t have to wait for specific business results to be achieved before their teams experience momentum. The wisest leaders know that momentum is a resource – and it can be created anytime we want. All we have to do is ask the right questions.

What focus will you have, and what questions will you ask, so when your new team is introduced to you they can feel the business move forward faster?

## BEST PRACTICE #5: Reinforce Friendships – Even After You Become the Boss

In a coaching session a client shared his excitement: In two weeks he was stepping into his dream job. “Years ago when I worked in that business unit,” he said, “I knew this was the position I wanted.” There was only one challenge: He’d be returning to lead people who were formerly his peers, many of whom were important in his life. “How do you lead someone you still consider a friend?” he asked.

His question indicated he has the awareness necessary for success. Too many people in similar positions have avoided addressing the obvious change in roles and assumed or hoped the issue would “go away” or resolve itself. (And we all know how dangerous assumptions are.)

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

Some people may suggest that you can’t be friends with those you’re responsible for leading. Not so. Some of my best friends are employees, and all of our employees are friends I consider family. The key is establishing guidelines and boundaries that allow both aspects of the relationship – personal and professional – to flourish.

A **3-Point Plan for Friends** was devised for this coaching client and proved to be exactly what was necessary for leaders to prosper in such circumstances:

1. *Acknowledge that you and your friend are in a unique situation.* For example, “We used to be peers, and we’ve been friends for a long time. Now my role and responsibilities have changed. What do you think about all of this?”
2. *Share your vision for the evolving relationship.* For example, “I want us to remain good friends. I anticipate the trust between us will always be strong. And, I also know that both the amount of time we’ll spend together, as well as the type of information we share, will change. What’s important to you as our friendship evolves under these circumstances?”
3. *Moving forward, seek, identify, and acknowledge the moments the two of you operate from the evolved vision you have for the friendship, and articulate the difference the change is making.* For example, a month later after a meeting you might say, “That last meeting was enjoyable for me. We laughed together, and we maintained our professionalism. This sort of respect we have for each other frees me to lead and be true to myself. Thank you.”

### What’s Possible?

The leaders who are free to be the greatest expression of who they are have something in common: They’re true to who they are *all the time*. They’re not one type of person as a leader – and a different individual away from their team. As leaders, they have the opportunity to be transforming and inspiring. This is compelling for those around us and a natural ingredient that births friendships as well. How will you leverage this component to ensure stronger partnerships that are both gratifying and ultimately accelerate performance?

# BEST PRACTICE #6:

## Lead People through the Natural Phases of Change

Author William Bridges, in his important work on managing change, identifies the three phases people go through when experiencing significant change. For our purposes, we're taking it a step further:

**Phase 1:** *Fear of the unknown.* This shows up as reluctance to move forward, defensiveness, procrastination, and other undesirable qualities that slow progress. In other words, don't be surprised if some people fear you.

**Phase 2:** *Indecisiveness.* This is characterized by the "flip-flop." One minute you think a person is excited about you as a leader, and the next moment you overhear him criticizing you.

**Phase 3:** *"All in."* This is when people are completely on board with the new direction and your leadership. You may even sense they "have your back."

Some leaders in new roles inadvertently use an approach that delays their team's progress through these phases: Rather than creating a space of collaboration and co-discovery, they expect others to adjust to them. "This is who I am," they say. "This is how it's going to be."

As a new leader we represent change. Regardless if the team has known us as a person in the past, they don't know us in our new role. And more importantly, they won't immediately understand how or where they fit in our plans for the future. That means a lack of security, the seed of fear. (This is Phase 1.)

There's often a temptation to quell the fear by giving big speeches that inform others of our vision. But if enough data hasn't been presented that answers an employee's burning question – "Where do I fit?" – an employee may get as far as Phase 2 and then stall.

Ironically, this demonstration of hesitancy or disengagement by team members can cause a new leader to question the aptitude of his new employees. "Why are they so reluctant to embrace change?" he wonders, unaware that the answer lies in his own actions.

## Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

Help people get through the uncertainty of change and move through these phases efficiently. Here's how:

1. Your vision is important – and so is the perspective your new employees have. After you've shared your values, ideals, and what you see in the future, ask those around you for their point of view – and listen closely.
2. As soon as you can, give people feedback that informs them of the important role they play in accomplishing the vision. For example, "The work you do is instrumental to where we're going, and here's why . . ."
3. In cases where you're unsure what role a person may play, the most respected leaders are honest and direct. Reduce ambiguity by informing the employee, "I'm seeking clarity for the role you'll play in advancing our mission. What perspective do you have?" Then, establish the decision criteria and timeline with the employee so that person has as much information as possible.
4. Just as it's important to inform people of what will change, it's also essential to let them know what won't change. Where and how can they expect things to be normal?

## What's Possible?

It's powerful to assist others in processing the emotions of change. While rhetoric and speeches are the most common approaches, what actions will you take to honor the phases your new team is going through, show you're listening deeply, and that you're enthusiastic about their contributions moving forward?

## BEST PRACTICE #7: Establish the Safe Environment for Others to Take Risks

Many organizations insist on having safe workplaces, and for good reason: Lives matter. In addition, when we're safe we're more productive. Safety should be an objective *in everything we do* for any new leader, especially in this area: The safety necessary to take risks.

A college basketball coach I know disagreed with this philosophy. His mantra: "Always keep them guessing." He philosophized that if his players didn't know where they stood with him that this would keep the players guessing – and, therefore, working harder to impress him.

It never worked. His team would predictably quit giving their best effort as the season progressed. They grew tired of the disrespect and uncertainty.

People can't step into the unknown and take the risks required for success unless they are secure in where they are. Building on the insights of Best Practice #6, leaders who move their organizations forward fast make efforts to reduce the uncertainty in their organizations – so people feel safe sooner. (Note: This sort of "safety" should not be confused with an acceptance of the status quo.)

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

Consider these and other actions early to develop the safety others need to focus on the most important work:

1. Establish routines and a meeting cadence that are predictable and healthy for the team's long-term success. For example, it's worth considering how early you arrive at the office each morning, as well as how late you leave. People are watching. Are you sending the message you intend?
2. Create maxims and other points of focus that make it easier for others to remember and reinforce priorities.
3. Remain mindful of how you respond to questions from others. Will you provide answers that train them to increasingly rely on you in the future – or ask questions that expand their capability?
4. Meet early and often with key influencers. They will share their perception of your leadership and methodologies with others.
5. Let the team know you're human. A healthy level of transparency and vulnerability – revealing who you really are – is an ingredient for establishing trust.

**Bonus:** [Watch this popular, short video](#) for additional steps leaders can take to create a culture that enables risk taking.

### What's Possible?

This dynamic is true almost everywhere one goes: People want to make a difference. They want to be great at what they do. The sooner an environment is created that allows these desires to be fulfilled the quicker the vision of excellence becomes a reality. What actions will you take early that eliminates guesswork and clears the way for real work?

## BEST PRACTICE #8: Communicate that You Are Not Running for Political Office

If your new organization is like most, there are unseen forces at play that affect the type and degree of effort people make in their work. Commonly referred to as “office politics,” the camps of ideology that exist around sensitive issues within a business can be divisive and destructive.

It won't take long after you're introduced, and some people will want to “size you up” and determine what “side” you will take as it relates to internal debates (many of which have raged for years).

In addition, a supervisor whispered this insight during a tailored workshop designed to support his team's acceleration through change: “When our current manager came on board, he assessed and told us where he saw our greatest gaps. In the course of dispensing his wisdom upon us he made it clear in both his tone and words where his predecessor had made mistakes.

“That's where he lost us: He didn't realize that we respected his predecessor. By focusing on gaps and past mistakes he wasn't impressing us, he was insulting us. It was us who had been doing the work he was now criticizing.”

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

Leaders with integrity spend little or no time judging what happened prior to their arrival. Instead, they seek the best method to leverage the past to ensure the future is improved. Some of your new teammates may need to be informed that you're not running for a political office. You don't need votes to carry an agenda forward. When you sense people are campaigning, follow through with these steps we've seen successful leaders take:

1. Disengage from the rhetoric. Your words and responses will be watched carefully. Make it clear your priority is loyalty to the mission of the organization.
2. Model respect for every opinion. Team members will soon understand that you seek as many perspectives as possible – and the more diverse the ideas, the better.
3. Leverage the past. (What must be learned so we're stronger moving forward?) Change doesn't have to mean “different.” It can also mean “evolution.”
4. Reward maverick thoughts and unique opinions that are conducive to forward progress.
5. Be clear that you won't tolerate relationship conflicts. Vigorous debate is desired – and teamwork is a must.
6. Be relentless in your standard and expectation of excellence – and primarily for what causes excellence: The *how*, the mindset, and the actions your team uses to deliver results.

### What's Possible?

Nothing beats a team that is aligned, communicating, trusting, and fighting for each other's success. Leaders who focus on creating the conditions for excellence always outperform their counterparts who only demand excellence. What mindset and behaviors do you know are necessary for your vision to become a reality? And from day one, what will you do to enable your team to think and function at higher levels?

## BEST PRACTICE #9:

### Advance the Culture: Stories aren't just for Bedtime Anymore

Assimilating to the existing culture, as well as taking it to new levels, is essential. (After all, “culture eats strategy for lunch.” [Stomp the Elephant in the Office](#), Wister and Willows, 2007) Yes, you were hired to lead change. But will people resist you – or embrace you by saying, “She’s one of us.”?

How do you become “one of them” while being your authentic self and still lead change?

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

People love stories. Well-told tales inform people and transfer institutional knowledge and wisdom in ways that corporate policy and manuals never can. Use this to your team’s advantage by using your early days on the job to learn through stories.

Ask people to “tell me a story . . .

- . . . of other periods in company history when change was handled well and leveraged.”
- “. . . of the people who best model our organization’s key values.”
- “. . . of what our team values look like in action.”
- “. . . of when you’ve seen conflict handled effectively and productively.”
- “. . . of a time when a difficult issue was resolved with excellence.”

Here’s a nasty trick some leaders subject themselves to: In an effort to model accountability, they encourage their teammates to inform them when they’re *not* walking the talk. Rarely does this provide value, and it often backfires. Here’s why:

- A majority of people are not comfortable or confident enough to tell their boss (especially a new one) he or she is not modeling behaviors well. As a result, because management isn’t getting this feedback, it provides the false impression they *are* walking the talk.
- It’s not uncommon for leaders (humans, really) when confronted with such information to rationalize the behavior or become defensive. This only damages perceptions people have of their supervisor – and the relationship they have with them.
- It’s a fact: The mind goes in the direction of its focus. When we point out what someone is doing wrong . . . they naturally go further in the same direction.

It’s useful to inform your new teammates that you probably won’t be perfect in modeling values, though you aspire to pursue excellence in this area. Because accountability is important to you, they can assist your efforts by giving you feedback when you do lead from and demonstrate the actions and values that are important to them. When they explain to you why and how your actions make a difference for them, you’ll be even more inclined to model them.

### What’s possible?

The old expression is true: Certain moments are truly “once in a lifetime.” There will never be as opportune a time to establish a values-based culture as there is in the first months of your new role. What will the team see and hear from you that transforms their ability to live and lead in powerful ways?

## BEST PRACTICE # 10: Make Your Vision of Success a Reality Faster

Your new team may have had to endure numerous leadership changes prior to your arrival. Even if they haven't, you already know there may be some team members who greet you with skepticism (or even cynicism). Leaders who are [Accelerators](#), therefore, move quickly to ensure the "renewal" phase is neither lengthy nor costly. Leaders who don't understand this are often subjected to the "wait and see" curse. This happens when the team decides to:

- Wait and see if you understand their business.
- Wait and see if your initiatives are worth them investing their effort.
- Wait and see if your ideas and changes are just the "flavor of the month."
- Wait and see if you're equipped to create the alignment, communication, and trust necessary for success.

This is a curse from which no one should suffer.

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

There are specific actions a leader can take to deliver excellence fast. How soon your vision of success becomes a reality depends on how quickly you accomplish the four actions below.

*But wait!* Before you read these four steps, a word of caution: You'll recognize steps 1-3. They're fundamental, almost logical. It's step #4 where leaders differentiate themselves and accelerate performance.

1. Identify and ensure the team is aligned on a compelling vision and they understand what success looks like to achieve their objectives.
2. Determine what plans, strategies, and actions are necessary to deliver success as outlined in step #1.
3. Collectively decide what mindset, behaviors, and values will drive the outcomes you need.
4. Equip and enable your team to function (in every interaction of every day) with the qualities established in step #3.

These steps are a part of our Moving it Forward<sup>SM</sup> Formula, a powerful and practical tool we train leaders around the world to support their teams with. It is painful observing unaware bosses accomplish the first three steps and then fall apart at step #4. The leaders who differentiate themselves know that most of their peers can communicate to their team *what* they need to accomplish (steps #1 and #2) and what behavior is necessary for success (step #3). It is the rare leader who invests in equipping the team with the *how*, the *tools*, and the *approach* essential for the *what* to happen.

We've never heard a leader say, "I wish I'd done this later." In other words, the sooner your team is equipped and enabled with a common language and an aligned method for moving issues forward, the sooner you realize success. Verus Global is proud to be a resource in this regard for thousands of leaders around the world. Here are five questions you can use to facilitate a conversation with your team that begins to build the awareness and behaviors necessary for acceleration:

1. Regarding the mindsets, behaviors, and values we've identified as critical, please choose one and answer this question: What does it look like when successfully modeled (even in the toughest of circumstances)?
2. What have we done to increase our proficiency at modeling these behaviors and values?
3. What do you see as next steps in developing our capability to function with the leadership behaviors we've aligned on?
4. What difference will it make for our business, our customers, our employees – and their families – as we become even stronger at living the values we've established?
5. *How* do we accomplish the objectives identified in step #3?

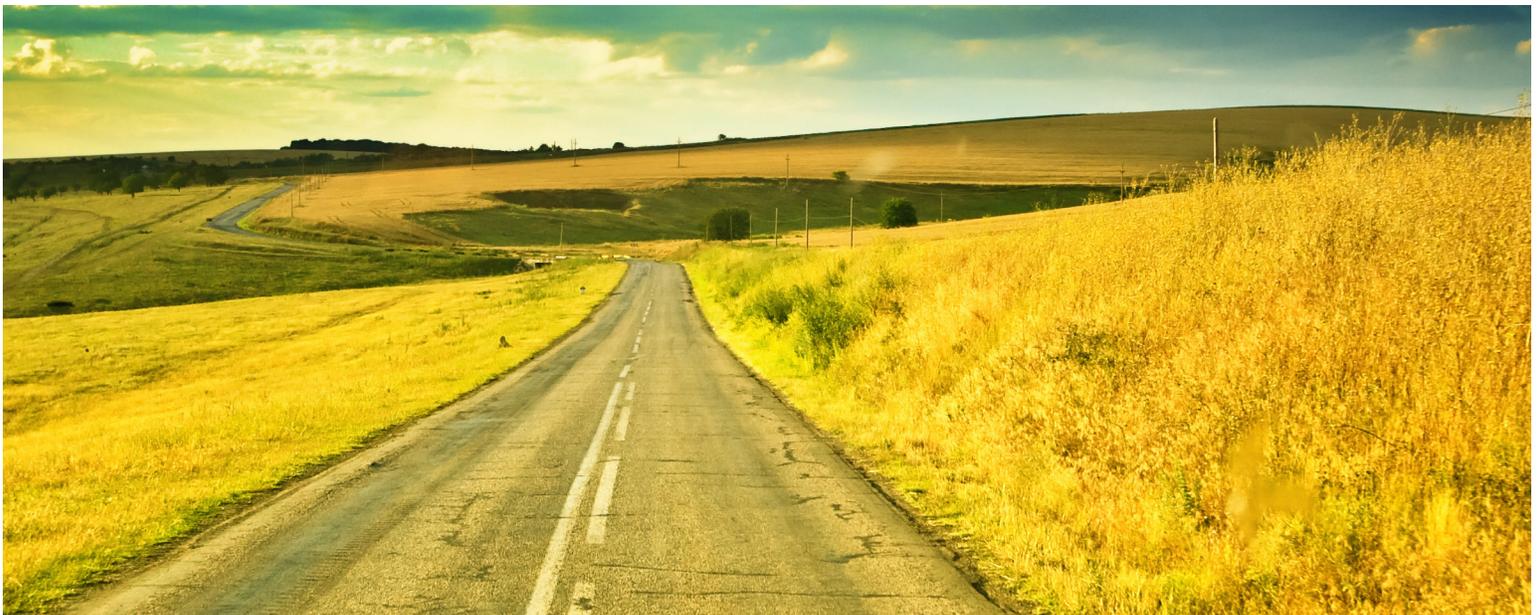
## What's Possible?

Have you ever seen a parent entering a store with a child, and just before they go through the door, the parent looks down at the child and says, "Now, I need you to behave when we get in there!"

What's the success rate for parents who use that approach?

It's the same with adults. Companies are famous for identifying the behaviors necessary for excellence and then telling their employees what their behavior should be. And their success rate is the same as that of the parents going into the store.

You're different. You're ready to be more effective. This is your chance to prove that you are a visionary and you can execute – because you build capability and capacity. What tools are you eager to provide your teammates so they can deliver excellence sooner?



## BEST PRACTICE 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>: Trust Your Instincts

Once, while enjoying breakfast with a leader I respect greatly, I asked him, “After 30 years as a professional, what’s the single greatest leadership lesson you’ve learned?”

He smiled and had an immediate answer. “Trust your instincts,” he said. “I wish I’d learned that sooner. If I had, I could have made a greater difference.”

### Use the Transition to Deliver Excellence

This best practice is not #11 . . . because it’s still being formed, it’s still being created. And you are the author. You are working on your own masterpiece.

What would be necessary for others to consider you a model at using transitions to deliver excellence sooner? If your gut is telling you that you’ve got the answers you need to make this transition a change for the better, trust it.

Consider these questions as you establish your own best practices in using your transition to deliver excellence:

1. Where and in what ways have my leadership instincts served me in the past?
2. How will those instincts provide me with the confidence I need to achieve our vision of excellence?
3. What can I do more of, or differently, to “tune in” to my instincts even more?
4. What do my instincts tell me will be important to do and achieve in the next six months? With my new team? For my family? Regarding the relationship I have with my supervisor? For my personal health?
5. How will I determine if my instincts can be trusted? (Hint: Do they inform me of ways to develop people, build stronger partnerships, and deliver accelerated performance?)

### What’s Possible?

What *is* possible for you? What do you see your team accomplishing? What is your dream for your family?

What will it be worth to you when, in answering the above questions, you hold on to the answers and establish them as your vision? And what will happen when you remain vigilant and persevere in your pursuit of excellence?

If your instincts are telling you “I can make this a change for the better,” listen closely – because you are right.

## NEXT STEPS

For editing support prior to publishing, this Verus *QuickRead* was shared with several people, including leaders from different levels of various organizations in numerous industries and countries. (Their efforts are greatly appreciated.) In their feedback a common theme emerged: While this *QuickRead* is packed with value, it still doesn't accomplish what can be achieved when this work is done in collaboration with a person who is skilled and passionate about serving you.

We encourage you to share this material with others – and then go a step beyond in your gift to them: Regularly provide feedback, additional questions, and support that fuels them to new levels. The Verus Global® website at [verusglobal.com](http://verusglobal.com) provides books, guides, tools, and other information leaders around the world are using to make a change for the better.

You can also ask others to support you in the same way. If you're serious about transitioning to a higher level of excellence, the Verus Global® Beyond Coaching exercise is noteworthy because of its success rate. (It's structured, rigorous, and not for the wimpy.)

If a less formal approach is what you desire, the performance experts at Verus Global can also recommend proven strategies others are using as best practices. Reach out to us at +1.303.577.0075.

## RESOURCES

The best practices contained in the Verus *QuickRead* were collected more than 20 years of working with leaders at all levels around the world as they've transitioned from one job to the next. Their experiences and wisdom are a gift to others.

In addition, the following resources were influential in writing this piece. While there are no direct passages or ideas duplicated in this document, certainly thoughts and ideas were shaped by these efforts:

- Craig W. Ross and Steven W. Vannoy, [Degrees of Strength](#) (Wister & Willows, 2012)
- William Bridges with Susan Bridges, [Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change](#) (Da Capo Press, 1991)
- George B. Bradt, Jayme A. Check, and Jorge E. Pedraza, [The New Leader's 100-Day Action Plan](#) (John Wiley & Sons, 2009)
- Steven W. Vannoy and Craig W. Ross, [Stomp the Elephant in the Office](#) (Wister and Willows, 2007)

## WHAT WE DO

**Verus Global® equips leaders to deliver best ever performance. And, we do it like nobody else.**

If you are going to be the best in the market, then your talent, culture, and leadership have to be capable of delivering best ever performance . . . regardless of the circumstances facing your business. Verus Global® provides the “how” (the tools) and the approach to transform every interaction of every day. This combination enables your teams to achieve objectives faster and establish enduring momentum.

Best ever means you and your team realize and activate potential. As you live and lead from shared values, inspiration becomes the norm. Your daily reality: An environment of excellence that promotes and delivers continuous improvement and results.

(And, that changes everything.)

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