You're in Charge: Now What?

Group Study Guide

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You're in Charge: Now What? Study Guide

This document contains discussion questions and exercises to assist your group in studying "You're in Charge: Now What?" by Thomas Neff & James Citrin.

Theme: You can maximize your success by ensuring that your first hundred days get off to the right start.



Note to participant:

This study guide will provide questions to help you apply key ideas in the book to your leadership position or challenge.

Notes to leader:

- Focus your discussions on how each person can apply the 8-Point Plan to his or her new challenge or leadership role.
- The Self-Assessment Exercise is for each person's personal reflection. Some participants may prefer not to discuss it.
- The Personal Action Plan is an opportunity to form accountability partnerships for those who wish to do so.

1-Prepare Yourself During the Countdown	1
Absorb Information	1
Develop a 100 Day Agenda	1
Get in Shape for the Race	1
2-Align Expectations	2
Introduce Yourself	2
Construct a Shared Reality	2
Be a Receiver, Not a Broadcaster	2
Establish Winning Conditions during the Cl	_
3-Shape Your Team	4
Assess Your Potential Team	4
Develop a Confidant	4
Realize, No One Can Do It Alone	4
4-Craft Your Strategic Agenda	5
Know Your Mission	5
Establish Your Short-Term Agenda	5
Define Operating Mechanisms	5
5-Start Transforming Culture	6
Learn the Lay of the Land	6
Give an Invitation to Change	6
Define Which Aspects of the Culture to Ch	ange

7
7
7
7
8
8
8
8
8
9
0
1
2

1-Prepare Yourself During the Countdown

Absorb Information

	e can you get information about the ization and its current employees	
_	teers), and leaders?	
•	will you need to work closely with to be	
	cess in this new position? What	
•	ons will you ask these key tuents?	
	tuents? does the organization serve? Where	
	ou get information about how they view	
	rvices and products they are getting	
	he organization?	
•	ou arrange to shadow your cessor or do an apprenticeship?	
pi caci	cooci oi de dii appi diideediip.	
Develop a	a 100 Day Agenda	
\	will be your key feeue during this time?	
	will be your key focus during this time? key actions will you take?	
	u have what you need to complete	
	actions? What training or resources	
•	need?	
	do you need to do to prepare your for the intensity of demands that you	
•	ve initially with the new position?	
0 (; 0)	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
Get in Sn	nape for the Race	
• What	will you do to increase your physical	
	na for the challenge?	
	at exercise program will you put in	
plac∈ • Wha	er at changes will you make to your diet	
	nprove your overall health?	
	will you do to strengthen yourself	
spiritu	•	
▶ vvna place	at Bible reading plan will you put in e?	
•	at improvements will you make to your	
pray	er life?	

2-Align Expectations

Before accepting the position, verify that you have common ground on key goals with the person who will be your boss. What are the key goals of your prospective boss? What are your key goals?

Introduce Yourself

- Admit You Don't Have All the Answers: What are the key challenges for this organization for which you have no immediate solution?
- Address Doubts and Fear:
 - In what ways could you walk in the shoes of those in your new organization to gain a better understanding of their challenges?
 - How will you determine what your new team expects of you and any concerns they have about you?
 - What will you do to determine how the team views its strengths and challenges?
 - ▶ In what ways could you show respect for your predecessor?

Construct a Shared Reality

- What is your plan for gaining alignment with key constituents regarding the current state of the organization?
- How can you develop a solid support base?
- How clear is the direction of the organization? How clear are each person's roles and responsibilities?

Be a Receiver, Not a Broadcaster

 What will it take for you to use active listening as your key method for learning and building commitment from others?
 What questions will you ask them?

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SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- What are the top three things we should preserve about this ministry?
- What are the top three things we should change about this ministry?
- How is God blessing you in this ministry?
- What are the needs of the people we serve through this ministry?
- What advice do you have for me?
- What else do you want to discuss?

Establish Winning Conditions during the Change	
 What are the challenges you will face in making the changes you need to make to the organization? How will you be certain each key person is fully aware of the challenges? What progress reviews will you establish to be sure that key players stay informed of the challenges? What early tangible deliverables will you require to instill a sense of urgency? What is your plan for engaging the early adopters quickly and bring along the "fence-sitter" in an orderly way? What is your strategy for identifying sources of resistance and dealing with them deliberately and firmly? 	

Page [3]

3-Shape Your Team

As	sess Your Potential Team	
, .0		
•	For each key leader, answer: ➤ Does this person have a positive influence on others in the organization? How does this person relate to others in the organization? ➤ To what degree is this person committed to the organization? Does your team overall have what it will take	
•	to make the necessary changes to the organization? What complementary skills do your team leaders possess? How will they blend with	
	yours?	
De	velop a Confidant	
•	Who have you identified as your trusted revolutionary or brain trust?	
Re	alize, No One Can Do It Alone	
•	For each key leader answer: What motivates this person? In ways can I modify my management style when interacting with this person to get the best performance from him/her? What value can this person bring to the team? How can I help this person see the	
•	importance of his/her contributions? What can I do to make it clear to the key	
	leaders that we need to be a team and how we can make that happen?	
•	How can I assert myself in a positive way?	

4-Craft Your Strategic Agenda

Know Your Mission What is the mission of the organization you are (will be) leading? In what way does your group's mission contribute to the overall organizational mission? Establish Your Short-Term Agenda How will you avoid promising more than you and your organization can deliver? What have you taken into account in developing your short-term agenda? How long is your priority list of things to fix? If it's more than five, what criteria will you use to reduce the size of the list? Define Operating Mechanisms How often will you hold staff meetings? What will be typical agenda items (that contribute to addressing the short-term agenda in a meaningful way)? What quick wins have you identified, if any? What is your strategy for handling push back in a positive way? How will you make certain that your leaders are accountable and in alignment with the short-term agenda?

5-Start Transforming Culture

Learn the Lay of the Land Who are the five most respected people in your new organization and why are they respected? Who are the gatekeepers of important information? Give an Invitation to Change What incentives can you provide to people who embrace the changes you see as necessary? Who have you identified as early adopters of the changes? In what ways can you change measures of success so they align with the new culture? How can you adjust operating processes to support the culture change? To what degree are you modeling the changes you want others to make to their behaviors? Define Which Aspects of the Culture to Change How have you defined the specific behavioral changes needed to support the culture change? What is your plan for communicating the changes?

6-Manage Your Boss Understand the Motivations of Your Boss What is your strategy for being loyal to your boss? How will you keep balanced in your conversations with your boss and give good advice rather than be a "yes" person or constant devil's advocate? What is your strategy for making your boss look good? Define Your Working Relationship How does your boss establish priorities? How often does your boss want an update from you? What format of updates would be most useful to your boss (written, verbal, formal, fluid)? What results or initiatives would make your boss look good? How does your boss define success? Share the Same Reality How will you keep your boss in the loop on key issues? How will you let your boss know your concerns and what you think are key priorities?

- How will you make it comfortable for your boss to give you informal feedback?

7-Communicate

Comm	unicate in Both Directions	
orga how • What com • How	w will you know if people in your enization understand overall goals and they each contribute to those goals? at can you do to initiate 2-way enmunication? w will you identify interests of each group tailor your words to best connect with m?	
Know \	Yourself as a Communicator	
as a • sp • lis	peaker? tener?	
• Wh	riter? at is your plan for leveraging your engths to best convey your message to ers?	
Manag	e Your Implicit Communications	
> yo > yo > yo > ho • How that	at signals are people getting from: our punctuality or tardiness? our demeanor? our communication methods? ow well you deliver on commitments? ov will you balance your need to express of you have the answers with your need to	
	re Your Organization for Optimal unication	
the you, peo • Wh wha	at organizational structure will promote most effective communication between people in the organization, and the ple you serve? at decision-making will you delegate and ot boundaries will you set for decision-	

8-	Avoid Common Pitfalls	
Ho	w will you avoid the following pitfalls?	
1.	Setting unrealistic expectations (over- promising and under-delivering will your credibility with everyone)	
2.	Making rash decisions or getting stuck in analysis paralysis	
3.	Being a know-it-all (know-it-alls alienate others and deprive themselves of useful information from others)	
4.	Failing to let go of your past identity (frequent references to your former leadership role will alienate those in your new organization)	
5.	Sporting "The Emperor's New Clothes"	
6.	Stifling Dissent (forcing others to comply will discourage them and deny you the information you need to perform at your best)	
7.	Succumbing to the savior syndrome (doing it all yourself will lead to burn out, thinking it's all about you could lead to horrible decisions)	
8.	Misreading the true sources of power	
9.	Picking the wrong battles	
10	."Dissing" your predecessor	

The Next 100 Days and Beyond

What is your ongoing plan to listen and learn?	
What precautions will you take to under- promise and over-deliver?	
How do you plan to continue the momentum	
that you build?	
	-

Exercise: Self-assessment

For each statement below, indicate a number from 1-10, where "1" means you strongly disagree and "10" means you strongly agree.

	disagree ——agree
I identify key constituents with whom I need to develop relationships.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
At least four times a week, I spend time in God's Word.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I engage in active listening to learn and build commitment.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I assess my potential team to see how their skills will blend and to	
see where I need to make changes.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I implement operating mechanism that help leaders be accountable	
and in alignment.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I model the behaviors that I want to see in others.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I have a strategy for making my boss look good.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I communicate in a way that is meaningful to others.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I manage my implicit communications to send positive signals	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I know the common pitfalls and do my best to avoid them.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Things to Ponder:

- As you carefully consider your responses, which low scoring areas are you ready to address?
- As you consider your responses overall, where will you likely have the biggest struggle?

Exercise: Personal Action Plan

Create a personal action plan to apply a lesson you learned from this book.

	My Lesson to Apply:				
	My Accountability Partner:				
	[Person who will ask about my consistency, encourage				
me, urge me to continue, and praise me for progress)					
Specific Behaviors I Commit to Demonstrate as I Apply My Lesson					
	Rehavion When				

Behavior	Where	When