

The New Leader's Cheat Sheet To Overcoming the 25 Obstacles

Difficulty transitioning from an individual contributor to a leader of others.

- Accept and embrace your new role as a leader.
- Shift your mindset from doing tasks to managing people and processes.
- Focus on developing your leadership skills and seek mentorship.

Struggling to let go of individual contributor responsibilities.

- Identify the tasks that should be delegated to your team members.
- Trust your team's capabilities and provide them with the necessary support.
- Monitor progress without micromanaging, and focus on coaching and guidance.

Being prone to micromanaging the work of others.

- Develop trust in your team members' abilities and expertise.
- Set clear expectations and provide support when needed.
- Focus on outcomes rather than overseeing every step of the process.

Facing challenges in developing strategic relationships across the organization.

- Build a network of contacts within your organization, both within and outside your department.
- Actively participate in cross-functional projects and initiatives.
- Seek opportunities to collaborate and share knowledge with others.

Difficulty in making the work understandable for others.

- Develop strong communication skills to clearly articulate goals and expectations.
- Adapt your communication style to suit different team members and situations.
- Encourage open dialogue and feedback to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Struggling to create an environment of creativity and innovation.

- Foster a culture of open-mindedness and encourage the sharing of ideas.
- Provide resources, time, and support for innovative initiatives.
- Recognize and reward creativity and celebrate successes.

Finding it challenging to provide performance coaching to others.

- Develop your coaching and mentoring skills through training and practice.
- Establish regular check-ins with your team members to discuss performance and development.
- Provide constructive feedback and create actionable development plans.

Struggling to provide coaching for growth and development to team members.

- Understand your team members' strengths, weaknesses, and career aspirations.
- Create personalized development plans to address skill gaps and future growth.
- Encourage continuous learning and provide resources for professional development.

Being prone to suspicion and mistrust of others.

- Reflect on your biases and assumptions and challenge them.
- Focus on building trust and open communication within your team.
- Encourage transparency and honesty in all interactions.

Taking personal credit for successful teamwork.

- Acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of your team members.
- Share success stories and give credit where it's due.
- Develop a collaborative and supportive team culture.

Finding it difficult to avoid assigning blame to others.

- Embrace a solution-oriented mindset and focus on learning from mistakes.
- Encourage open and honest discussions about challenges and setbacks.
- Promote a culture of accountability and personal responsibility.

Difficulty in shifting focus from individual results to team results.

- Set team goals and objectives that align with the overall organizational strategy.
- Foster collaboration and teamwork within your team.
- Measure and evaluate success based on collective outcomes.

Struggling to network with like-minded people outside your own area of expertise.

- Attend industry events, conferences, and workshops to expand your network.
- Connect with professionals on social media and join relevant online communities.
- Build relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Being resistant to personal risk or exposure to risk.

- Reflect on your own risk tolerance and identify areas for growth.
- Embrace calculated risks and learn from both successes and failures.
- Encourage your team to take risks within acceptable boundaries and support them through the process.

Limitations in managing projects with a single discipline or focus.

- Gain a broader understanding of your organization's goals and challenges.
- Encourage cross-functional collaboration and involve diverse perspectives in project planning.
- Ensure projects align with the organization's overall strategy and objectives.

Struggling to deal with ambiguity in the workplace.

- Develop your adaptability and resilience to better navigate uncertain situations.
- Communicate openly with your team and provide reassurance during times of change.
- Make informed decisions based on available information and adjust course as needed.

Difficulty in navigating workplace politics.

- Build strong relationships and alliances within the organization.
- Stay informed about organizational dynamics and changes.
- Handle conflicts diplomatically and seek to find win-win solutions.

Challenges in strategically delegating work to team members.

- Clearly define roles and responsibilities within your team.
- Assess your team members' strengths, weaknesses, and interests.
- Delegate tasks based on individual capabilities and development opportunities.

Difficulty in allocating resources effectively to achieve team goals.

- Develop a clear understanding of your team's objectives and priorities.
- Assess the resources available and allocate them in a way that maximizes results.
- Continuously monitor progress and adjust resource allocation as needed.

Struggling to grow leadership capabilities in direct reports.

- Identify potential leaders within your team and provide them with opportunities to lead.
- Offer mentorship and coaching to help them develop their leadership skills.
- Encourage them to seek additional training and development opportunities.

Difficulty in holding direct reports accountable for meeting objectives.

- Set clear expectations and communicate them effectively.
- Regularly review progress and provide constructive feedback.
- Implement consequences for missed objectives and recognize achievements.

Finding it challenging to provide empathy to team members and colleagues.

- Develop your emotional intelligence and actively listen to others' concerns and feelings.
- Show genuine interest in your team members' well-being and work-life balance.
- Be supportive and understanding during challenging situations.

Difficulty in gathering continuous development feedback from team members.

- Create an open and trusting environment where feedback is welcomed and valued.
- Regularly solicit feedback through one-on-one meetings, surveys, or anonymous channels.
- Act on the feedback received and show appreciation for the input.

Facing obstacles in building core leadership competencies.

- Identify your strengths and weaknesses as a leader and create a development plan.
- Seek out training, mentorship, and learning opportunities to enhance your leadership skills.
- Continuously reflect on your progress and adjust your development plan as needed.

Finding it challenging to effectively resolve individual and team conflicts.

- Develop your conflict resolution and negotiation skills through training and practice.
- Address conflicts proactively and create a safe space for open communication.
- Seek to understand different perspectives and work toward a mutually beneficial solution.

10 Mile Markers of a Successful Transition to Leadership

+ 25 Obstacles to Successful Transitions to Leadership

Making the Mindset Shift –

Embrace the change in perspective from being an individual contributor to a leader, fostering a growth-oriented and proactive mentality.

Obstacles:

1. Difficulty transitioning from an individual contributor to a leader of others.
2. Difficulty in shifting focus from individual results to team results.
3. Being resistant to personal risk or exposure to risk.
4. Finding it difficult to avoid assigning blame to others.

Accepting the New Expectations –

Understand and adapt to the increased responsibility and expectations that come with a leadership role, including setting the vision and guiding the team.

Obstacles:

1. Struggling to deal with ambiguity in the workplace.
2. Difficulty in holding direct reports accountable for meeting objectives.

Organizing & Directing the Work of Others –

Create a structured and efficient system for managing tasks and resources, setting clear objectives and providing guidance to the team.

Obstacles:

1. Difficulty in making the work understandable for others.
2. Limitations in managing projects with a single discipline or focus.
3. Challenges in strategically delegating work to team members.
4. Difficulty in allocating resources effectively to achieve team goals.

Creating a Team Culture of Innovation –

Encourage creative problem-solving and a culture of continuous improvement within the team, promoting a forward-thinking approach to challenges.

Obstacles:

1. Struggling to create an environment of creativity and innovation
2. Struggling to network with like-minded people outside your own area of expertise.
3. Limitations in managing projects with a single discipline or focus.
4. Difficulty in navigating workplace politics.

Communicating Team/Individual Expectations –

Set clear expectations for both the team as a whole and each individual, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and fostering a sense of shared purpose.

Obstacles:

1. Difficulty in making the work understandable for others.
2. Challenges in strategically delegating work to team members.
3. Difficulty in allocating resources effectively to achieve team goals.



Learning to Let Go –

Delegate tasks effectively, empowering team members to take ownership, and stepping back from micromanagement to focus on high-level strategy.

Obstacles:

1. Struggling to let go of individual contributor responsibilities.
2. Micromanaging the work of others.
3. Being prone to suspicion and mistrust of others.
4. Taking personal credit for successful teamwork.

Building Strategic Relationships –

Cultivate meaningful connections with stakeholders, peers, and subordinates to ensure a supportive and collaborative work environment.

Obstacles:

1. Facing challenges in developing strategic relationships across the organization.
2. Difficulty in shifting focus from individual results to team results.
3. Struggling to deal with ambiguity in the workplace.
4. Providing empathy to team members and colleagues.

Coaching and Developing Self/Others –

Provide constructive feedback and support to team members, helping them grow both personally and professionally.

Obstacles:

1. Finding it challenging to provide performance coaching to others.
2. Struggling to provide coaching for growth and development to team members.
3. Struggling to grow leadership capabilities in direct reports.
4. Difficulty in gathering continuous development feedback from team members
5. Building core leadership competencies.

Demonstrating Empathy, Diversity, and Inclusiveness –

Show genuine understanding and concern for team members' needs and feelings, creating an inclusive and compassionate work environment.

Obstacles:

1. Struggling to provide coaching for growth and development to team members.
2. Finding it challenging to provide empathy to team members and colleagues.

Accountability –

Hold yourself and your team members accountable for actions, results, and continuous improvement, maintaining a high standard of performance and integrity.

Obstacles:

1. Taking personal credit for successful teamwork.
2. Finding it difficult to avoid assigning blame to others.
3. Difficulty in holding direct reports accountable for meeting objectives.
4. Finding it challenging to effectively resolve individual and team conflicts.