

APRIL CONTRIBUTORS



CHRIS JOHNSON EXECUTIVE COACH

Favourite App? LinkedIn.

First proper job? Systems analyst – I absolutely hated it.

Favourite website? TripAdvisor, because I'm always hunting for a good new restaurant.

Best habit? I like to clean the kitchen, sometimes up to four times a day, which I'm told is great to live with.

Never fails to make you laugh? I used to read *Paddington Bear* books to my kids every night and they made me cry with laughter. They still do!



JESSICA MUDDITT JOURNALIST

Word you overuse? "Amazing." Not everything can be amazing, but you wouldn't know it if you listened to me!

Superpower of choice? I'd love to fly so that I could see more of the world.

Signature dance move? The 'lawnmower' – straight out of the 80s.

Crime you'd commit if you could get away with it? I guess shoplifting at a store like Prada?



SABRI SUBY BUSINESS FOUNDER

Favourite website? thegaryhalbertletter.com

Superpower of choice?
The essential art of sales.

Best habit? Regularly going to a sauna for health and fitness, and also for stress relief.

Phrase you overuse? "Fire them up."

Never fails to make you laugh?
Will Ferrell, and my wife.

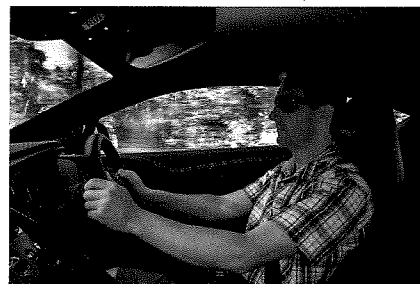
LISA SMYTH JOURNALIST

First proper job? Editorial assistant, though I was a manager at a Mr Whippy when I was 14.

Favourite website? I have been planning a lot of trips lately and I always use TripAdvisor as my starting point – it's such a great tool.

Crime you'd commit if you could get away with it? I really admire the Bristol 'grammar vigilante'.

Word you overuse? "Totes" – because it should never be used, but it falls into my vocabulary every now and again.



KARL PESKETT MOTORING JOURNALIST

First proper job? Pushing trolleys at a local supermarket.

Favourite website? BBC News.

Crime you'd commit if you could get away with it? I'm going to have to plead the fifth on this one....

Phrase you overuse the most?
"Yes, exactly."

Superpower of choice? Predicting the future, so I can see how much fallout there is from what I've said.



THE FIRST
100
DAYS

You're about to step into a new CEO role and studies show you have three months to make a positive impact.

Here are five ways to effectively cement your position.

WORDS • CHRIS JOHNSON

The role is coveted, prestigious, and potentially even glamorous, but being the CEO of a company is a hard position to hold on to. It is acknowledged that CEOs have only 100 days to cement their new role and secure their company's approval. But research has also shown that 40 per cent of new leaders fail within their first 18 months. This means the pressure is on for the CEO to make the first three months matter.

The number one reason for failure isn't lack of expertise. It's the fact that CEOs often misunderstand or ignore the political culture of a new workplace.

Many understand the concept theoretically, but are unsure how to practically implement it. These five points are essential for new CEOs to execute in order to read the new climate and establish themselves effectively.

FIVE WAYS FOR THE FIRST 100

1 START BEFORE YOU JOIN

Never leave it until the day you arrive to start learning about your new organisation. In the period between signing the contract and physically arriving, you need to do your homework. Meet your board, your chair and your top team for a coffee. Read everything you can about the company. And above all, read the company's appetite for change. This may seem excessive, but it's essential to understanding where the company currently is before you start making plans. Given that you've only got limited time, you don't want to waste the first few crucial weeks doing that.

2 MEET KEY STAKEHOLDERS

People often neglect to map out the existing balance of power in an organisation, but it is essential to do so early on. That means, first, pay attention to your chair, who is the key to the board. Learn how they like to run things. Always call them on a regular basis and brief them as to what's going on. Second, read your board. Who is really pulling the strings here, and what do you need to do to win them over? Third, do an overall plan of your stakeholders including your chair, your board, your key customers, relevant regulators, government departments, and so on, and make time early on to cement those relationships.

3 SECURE YOUR TOP TEAM

Time and again, CEOs fail to secure their top team quickly enough. It can be difficult to weed out negative or change-resistant people, but too often CEOs delay doing so until it is far too late. So read

your team and decide on who is on the bus. Pay special attention to anyone who was looked over for your role. Are they going to be hostile towards you? If so, address this instantly. If you don't, you'll lose valuable time and risk damaging both your effectiveness and reputation.

4 ACHIEVE QUICK WINS

It's likely that when you arrive you will instantly see some things you can change. It may be fixing an obvious and important flaw in customer relations, or getting a crucial deal over the line. Take note of these, and assess them on both how valuable they are and how much effort they require to achieve. You want ones that are high value and low effort, i.e. quick wins. Plan a few of them, spaced out over the first 100 days. Accomplishing them quickly establishes your reputation as a change maker – it also buys you time while you consider your long-term strategy.

5 MAKE A HOLISTIC PLAN

Many CEOs neglect their family, and certainly themselves, during this initial period. But they are essential to your mental wellbeing, and hence your decision-making ability. So make a plan for the next three months of your career that details the quick wins, the major milestones and big events. Then also write out your family's and your own. It may be going for a weekly run or attending your son's rugby game. Make sure you do this. Remember, in the first 100 days you need to be at your best, not distracted because you missed your daughter's graduation.

In short, this period is all about understanding the relationships, the power dynamics and the history of what you're walking into. Learn about your company culture, secure your main relationships, establish the top team, get some quick wins and ultimately have, and stick to, a plan. Overall, always remember to be reflective when making decisions. Just because something worked elsewhere, it does not mean it will work here. ■