



Your First Two Months

A Talentlab Job Seeker Guide

Think Back... Way Back

Try and remember the first day of kindergarten when you were just a little tyke. It was a bit frightening, if you were like most kids. All kinds of new people, new surroundings, new authority figures and new challenges... it was a lot to take in. You were probably most afraid of how you might, or might not fit in with your new classmates.

Starting a new job can be a similar experience (well, except for the sand boxes and finger painting). How will your colleagues like you? Will you catch on quickly in your new position? Will you see eye to eye with your boss? These are all valid questions and concerns when starting in a new position.

Here's what to expect and how to react in the first few months at your new job. Things in the work-world have changed substantially in the past few years. At one time, a new employee could waltz into a new position with the luxury of ninety days or more to prove themselves. The new economy now typically allows you only 60 days to get through the same barriers in starting a new job. The 'honeymoon period' is short and sweet, so be sure to make the most of it.

Getting Started

Don't expect to win a performance award in the first 2 weeks. Realize that there's a lot to learn and that it's unlikely you'll become an instant success, a subject of awe to your starry eyed new co-workers, a heavenly shaft of light guiding your way. The best way to impress your comrades during this period is to show interest in the company's corporate culture. Move beyond the confines of your comfortable cubicle and get to know the people you will be working with.

Get to work identifying the individuals that you'll be working closely with and then get to know them. Who are they? What do they like to do when they're not working? Who's playing in their CD player? Put aside a few days a week for lunches with your co-workers.

And for Pete's sake, don't go on and on about who you are and what you know and what you like—this is a time for listening and finding out what you need to know to find a common ground with your team. When you've made the initial, surface-level connection with your new teammates, building a deeper working relationship with them will be that much easier.

It has been said that upwards of 95% of firings are a direct result of a person's failing to fit into a company's culture. When you've developed a

social routine and gotten to know your team, don't then ignore them, as if they've served their purpose. The idea is to build secure relationships with your co-workers. If they like you, they won't want to see you go.

Getting Feedback

It is often assumed by managers that you'll know what's expected of you—even when what's expected has never been clearly articulated. Make sure that your boss is aware of what you're up to and get to the bottom of what's expected of you. Without a little aggressiveness and persistence, you may go unnoticed until it's too late.

Schedule a meeting with your boss. Make sure that you're clear about what is expected of you and what your responsibilities and limits are. Make a concerted effort to understand the needs of your new boss and strive to effectively meet those needs. Don't forget to stress your desire for feedback and constructive criticism. An open relationship and constant flow of communication is essential in building a strong bond with your new position. Your new boss will respect you all the more for taking action and being proactive. After all—a job well done by you looks good on your boss. Do this within a month of starting and you'll leave an amazing impression.

What's Next?

After a month or so, you should be pretty confident in your new role. At six weeks or so, you'll have a firm grasp of what is expected of you. Make sure that you're acting on what is expected of you and that your boss has seen enough production from you that he or she is confident in your abilities to do the job well.

You may find during this period that the position initially presented to you is not what you're actually doing. If this is the case, sit down and write a new job description. Get a list together of your most pressing deadlines, top projects and new responsibilities. You might also want to take this opportunity to explore any new areas of interest that you have identified to yourself along the way.

Guide your own future within the company; take the initiative and make it known where your interests lie. If you're successful in completing the tasks previously assigned to you, there is no reason to think that special projects would be discouraged. And besides, creativity is what amazing business is founded on.

At the same time, be cautious in choosing your projects. Make sure they're all well thought through and that they make sense to the company's bottom line. Your objective is not to prove that you can get something done... it's to prove that you can get the right things done. There's nothing worse than doing a whole lot of work, only to find out that the direction in which you took the project was wrong. Have vision, but choose your work wisely.

Congratulations!

Now that you've made it through the first two months in your new position, it's really important to avoid "the rut". Treat the next two months as you did the first two. It's just as important for veterans to renew and reboot as it is for new hires. You don't want your time to blur into redundancy—if you don't constantly focus on making things happen, pretty soon two months will turn into two years and you'll look back on your time as a boring fog. Keep things fresh and new. Whether you decide to stay in your current position or move on to a new one, treat every 60 day cycle as you would the first 60 days.

Your career will be so much better for it.

Other Tips

- Always look for ways to collaborate with others. There is efficiency in numbers and another individual might be better at certain tasks than you are. Take advantage of the talents around you.
- Know your industry and the key players and competition within it. Be a front line player and develop a reputation of always being in the know.
- Make a name for yourself in the organization. Make your company proud to say you work there.
- Challenge yourself. Learn new things and continually strive for excellence... and don't be afraid of sharing knowledge.
- Don't forget about yourself. Make sure you get enough sleep and take time out for family and hobbies. You will work more efficiently if you are rejuvenated daily. Balance is the key.
- Strive for excellence. See yourself several years down the road and envision future projects that will keep you going at Mach 10. The big picture is very important and when envisioned properly, will fuel your future.

Free Advice?

Want to find out a few more ways to make your first two months in a new job that much better? Call Talentlab® and make an appointment for your free career consultation. We can show you even better ways to show your boss that you rock, which in turn will make for a stellar reference when you decide to move on to a new job. Call us now at 613.271.8181 or 877.316.TLAB. You can also email us at info@talentlab.com.

© Talentlab Inc. All rights reserved..