



A Leadership Convention for the First 90 Days

About this document

This workbook guides you through 11 key priorities for your first 90 days as a leader in a new role, structured into three phases:

Day 01-30 Observe: listen, learn and build relationships

Day 31-60 Create: generate your plan and gain support.

Day 61-90 Execute: execute on your plan and create momentum.

Each of the 11 priorities contains two parts: a COD Advice section with our perspective and recommended actions, and a “My Plan” section where you can record your own commitments and next steps.

Remember to involve your direct manager, the CEO or the board in your intentions as early as possible. Transparency is a key component in building trust, establishing good communication and mutual respect. You can use this guide as a draft agreement document when discussing your plans with your key stakeholders.

The discipline of writing down your intentions is itself the first leadership act.



PHASE 1

OBSERVE

DAY 1-30

01 COMPLEMENT YOUR VIEW

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

It is impossible to have sufficient views on your own. Plan and execute internal and external meetings to complement your perspective during the introduction phase. Actively seek out different viewpoints before drawing conclusions.

Recommended actions:

- Clarify which perspectives you need to cover
- Define the key questions to ask each group
- Set up both individual and team meetings with key stakeholders and teams
- Summarize findings and draw your own conclusions
- Propose "Teach the Boss" sessions to accelerate your learning

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

02 COMMUNICATE STRENGTHS

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Giving credibility to current successful work and positive aspects ensures people become open-minded and receptive. **Moving on to challenges too quickly**, before trust and respect are established, is one of the most common mistakes new leaders make.

Recommended actions:

- Identify and confirm what is already strong today
- Ask for strengths across company, unit, and processes
- Learn and share the organization's success stories
- Create awareness of the link between people's effort and achievement
- Honor what people have built and delivered before you arrived

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

03 BOND YOUR TEAM

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Put deliberate effort into building strong bonds in your management team. There may be a history of competition and friction to address. **The better connected your core team is, the more speed and alignment you gain.**

Recommended actions:

- Create an atmosphere of trust and open sharing
- Design Management Team meetings and one-on-ones to foster real connection
- Assess trust levels, collaboration patterns, and accountability
- Focus on identifying and solving common long-term challenges together
- Plan deliberate time to meet outside of work

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:



PHASE 2

CREATE

DAY 31-60

04 BE AWARE

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

A frequent trap is prematurely making up your mind, dominating conversations, or **over-referencing your previous role, or your previous company by name**. Stay open, curious, and ready to learn before forming judgments.

Recommended actions:

- Avoid judging or evaluating before you fully understand
- Ask about the background and history of the company, teams, and people
- Focus on facts: always ask for them before forming opinions
- Learn the organization's language, terminology, and spirit
- Be neutral and meet people at eye-level
- Ask others first, involve genuinely, then add your own perspective

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

05 FIND THE GAPS

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Persistently work with teams to define a common direction and what is missing to get there - gaps - before identifying problems and solutions. People open up, become engaged, and get invited into a creative process. **The gaps are the fuel for development.**

Recommended actions:

- Involve individuals and teams in identifying common gaps
- Connect gaps to future market demands and strategic direction
- Keep the gap identification process fact-based
- Communicate the gap as a source of energy and future success
- Replace reactive behaviors with forward-looking, solution-oriented dialogue

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

06 ENABLE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Your strategic processes require a dedicated infrastructure. Be aware of the risk that operational topics dominate, leaving no time for strategic development. **Structure must be created within the first 90 days.**

Recommended actions:

- Set your development infrastructure within the first 90 days
- Schedule all team meetings 12 months ahead
- Create regular meetings with a dedicated development agenda
- Document and visualize adapted strategy per unit: plans, status, facts
- Decide on a common, transparent and dedicated workspace for the team
- Replace existing structures rather than adding new layers on top

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

07 DESIGN THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Identifying what to do differently to reach your targets is crucial. You can be a driver, but you cannot be everywhere. Design your company's or team's development program as a structured journey over 12 months.

Recommended actions:

- Plan program steps over a 12 month horizon
- Identify how to visualize direction and focus areas
- Involve co-workers in finding initiatives and solutions, do not impose them
- Include leadership and management development as the foundation for culture change
- Brand the program and communicate it with consistent frequency
- Utilize cross-functional groups to broaden perspectives and avoid silos

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

08 CONNECT TO YOUR MANAGER

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

The board, CEO, or your direct superior has expectations based on earlier experience. **Clarify your game plan** and way of working early to avoid misunderstanding, and to gain their active support.

Recommended actions:

- Visualize your game plan and way of working clearly
- Involve the board (if applicable) using a light, structured meeting format
- Explain targeted culture change and connect it to overall strategy
- Use concrete examples to illustrate your direction
- Ask how to make them feel safe, informed, and confident in you

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

09 PLAN WITH EACH TEAM

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Avoid breaking down or forcing your plan on others. The process is about **creating plans with each team, not for them**. Quality, acceptance, and execution are all higher when the team owns the plan.

Recommended actions:

- Clarify direction and focus areas together with each team
- Translate and adapt the overall strategy to each team's context
- Define a clear workflow for planning and team meetings
- Create short- and long-term action plans collaboratively
- Agree on how to secure execution: who does what, by when
- Get the team's agreement on how and when to follow up

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

10 ESTABLISH ONE MANAGEMENT MODEL

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

Create credibility for your way of working and processes from the very beginning. Communicate, utilize, and involve management consistently. **A shared management model provides predictable leadership and builds trust across all levels.**

Recommended actions:

- Expose people to your methodology and its impact as early as possible
- Re-balance target-driven approaches with genuine involvement
- Use methodology tools in real daily situations, not just workshops
- Identify and develop multipliers for your management style
- Follow up and review progress at regular intervals

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:

11 FORM A NEW BUSINESS CULTURE

CORE OF DEVELOPMENT ADVICE

By driving business development with a new leadership style, culture change is a natural outcome. **Culture change is not a side initiative**; it is the pre-condition for strategic fulfillment. Culture is the cumulative effect of how people work together every day.

Recommended actions:

- Visualize the connection between strategy and culture explicitly
- Position your leadership as the central driver of cultural change
- Clarify how the company's future depends on leaders' ability to change behavior
- Open business review meetings with a dedicated section on culture and development
- Define the desired culture through daily leadership behavior, not words on the wall

MY PLAN

How I will apply this in my specific context:
