

# ADCONIA INSIGHTS



September 2019: Renewal as a  
successful departure - Structure of the  
first 100 days

The famous first 100 days in a new position are formative. Expectations, uncertainties, hopes, dynamics, concepts, goals, plans, etc., from the point of view of the new employee on the one hand and the various stakeholders on the other.

Fact is that the expectations of and by a new job holder, especially in the early stage are particularly high. The picture that is formed in this first period from different perspectives has a considerable influence on future success and on the ability to implement the desired goals.

The recurring question that companies ask themselves when they fill a new management position and the manager concerned is also: „Is there a „blueprint“ with which these 100 days can be reliably structured? No, there is no such thing - yes, there is .... There are recurring structures that one can and should give to this period. Structures that ensure that essential aspects and needs of the various stakeholders are considered and satisfied. These structures can be divided into phases and priorities.

An essential phase, if not the most decisive, even if it does not pay into the 100 days, is preparation. Here both sides are responsible (supervisory board, management, divisional management, HR, etc. and the executive himself).

Goals, resources, responsibilities, time horizons, budgets and interfaces must be discussed thoroughly and largely defined. Any negligence in this preparatory phase slows down the desired dynamics of a new beginning considerably. At the same time, the future job holder must incorporate these points into his own personal target coordinate system. What are the expectations, where are the focal points and how does this fit in with my strengths and weaknesses?

The active phases of the 100 days can be divided regularly into

1. listening phase: Getting to know stakeholders
2. adjustment phase: Define actual analysis/baseline
3. architecture phase: Define development fields
4. action phase: Drawing up and agreeing a roadmap

Getting to know stakeholders and defining the current situation/baseline means one thing above all: listening, listening and listening again. Actively asking questions at all levels and interfaces and not commenting at all or with little value.

When defining the fields of development, which usually begins parallel to the first phase, the comparison of the agreed goals (and/or expectations) from the preparation phase with the results from the listening phase determines what happens. This analytically shaped alignment phase seamlessly merges into the architecture phase, in which the analytics are poured into strategic and operative measures that contain concrete target and time horizons. KPIs are defined, new processes recorded, organizational structures designed, risks defined, and controlling established. A roadmap is created. The job holder is particularly in demand here for his or her skills with regard to „winning“ communication. Coordination talks and enthusiasm for new approaches and ideas are taking place right now. It is the time when the new manager must set the first visible accents: He or she assesses the past and future of his or her area of responsibility and at the same time is assessed for the first time by the stakeholders and his or her own team. This is a sensitive phase, but with good preparation and professional support it contributes decisively to the desired success.

If this architectural phase is completed professionally and expectations are met positively, the first „operational“ baptism of fire takes place in the action phase. Selected measures are implemented. The experienced manager makes sure that he or she starts a healthy mixture of short, medium and long-term measures. In the case of short-term measures in particular, the aim should be to achieve quick-wins that are as verifiable as possible. Such successes do not only have to be reduced to directly relevant profit contributions, but can also extend to measurable increases in efficiency, e.g. through process and/or organisational adjustments.

It should be noted that the „magic of every beginning“ can then be successfully translated into a target-oriented dynamic if the first 100 days are approached and accompanied in a structured manner. A wait-and-see attitude, according to the motto: „Let's see what the new one brings us“, in many cases causes even promising candidates to stumble unnecessarily in the early phase and leads the existing organisation to quickly fall back into the old rut.

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