



5 Ways to Derail Your New Job

**What are the 5 biggest mistakes that new hires make when they start a new job?
Consider these 3 strategies to avoid failure.**

-Brenda Hampel & Erika Lamont, Partners

As part of the economy begins to improve and some companies such as Bloomberg , AT&T, Radio Shack and Walmart report that they are adding new jobs, candidates need to add another key component to their search strategies—*STARTING SMART*

Fast Fact:

59% of organizations say that the current economic conditions will increase the importance of onboarding over the next 12 months.

- 2010 Aberdeen Onboarding Report

Once a candidate does land that next job, the last thing that he or she wants to do is derail. The current issue of [Harvard Business Review](#) suggests the top five reasons that new hires fail. Their research was conducted with 400 executive search firms and 500 C-level leaders from 40+ countries, and heads of HR from multinational companies.

In this issue of *Keeping You Connected*, we will break down the five biggest mistakes and lay out three simple strategies to avoid them.

Mistake # 1 Not doing enough research.

Most people are so focused on the job (especially in this market) that they don't take the time to step back and do their "due diligence" on the company with which they are interviewing. It is critical for the job seeker to understand as much as possible about the financial conditional and stability of the company, its culture, its competition and long-term prognosis for success.

The consequences for a new hire if this research is not completed can be unrealistic expectations of the role, the culture or the overall health of the organization. Just as you wouldn't invest your money in a company without first understanding that it was on a solid course, neither should you invest yourself as a new hire without this information.

Mistake # 2 Deciding to take the job on money alone. The HBR article points out that most C-level executives rank salary as fourth or fifth on their list of what is most important to them when selecting a new job. But this jumps to number one when they are actually making their final decisions. In a shaking economy, people are especially

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vulnerable to this error and will overlook red flags if the money is good. **The consequences** of this mistake are being blinded by the money and not having clear pictures of the actual role and advancement. So you may be actually in a worse position for the long-run, if you made your move based on short-term financial gain.

Mistake # 3 Going “From” rather than going “TO”

Whether a new hire is going from a current job or unemployment to a new role, many make the mistake of moving too quickly just to change the current situation. They are often desperate, jump to a decision and usually make Mistakes # 1 and 2. **The consequence** of being focused on the “from” rather than the “to” could be a cycle of job changes that ultimately hurt your career and your ability to get the role that you really want and deserve.

Mistake # 4 Overestimating Yourself

Lack of self-awareness gets in the way of leaders having a clear view of their strengths and weaknesses. This then blocks them from developing a successful onboarding strategy. These are the leaders who blame the organization, their teams, or other factors for their challenges and failures. **The consequences** of overestimating yourself in a new role are that you could “start blind”. You use the same approaches and behaviors that you have used before; however, these usually don’t work in a new environment and culture. You are likely to run into barriers and resistance.

Mistake # 5 Thinking short term

What is worth noting is how these mistakes are interconnected. With a focus on the short term, you can easily see how the other four mistakes are made. If you overestimate yourself, you may think that you deserve more money now, causing you to jump “from” your current job, instead of strategically transitioning “to” a new role. This mistake also contributes to a common error that most new leaders make by trying to do too much too fast. **The consequences** of thinking short-term are that you may find yourself unhappy and disengaged after only a few weeks or months in your new role. Your team and peers will pick up on this and decide that “you don’t get it” or that “you are not here for the long-haul”.

3 Strategies to avoid onboarding failure

Now, the flip side. Here are the three secret ingredients to successful onboarding. Our research and experience has surfaced these critical components of a complete and best-practices leadership onboarding experience.

- Knowledge
- Relationships
- Feedback

Strategy 1: Get knowledge

By using the recruitment and Prestart (the time between acceptance and Day One) time period to build your knowledge about the organization and its culture, you are likely to avoid Mistake #1. A structured onboarding process delivers the right amount of information at the right times and provides learning with context, so you are not overloaded at the beginning, then left on your own after a couple of days or weeks.

Strategy 2: Build relationships Most leaders agree that they must build strong relationships with their peers, boss, team, customers and other key stakeholders to be successful. This is truer the higher up that you are in the organization when almost all results are delivered through teams of people, not individuals. A structured onboarding process includes important discussions with the hiring manager (the boss) to identify the key stakeholders and create a personal network for the new leader. This gives the new hire an intelligent starting place for building those relationships and using them to deliver her expected results.

About Connect the Dots Consulting

Connect the Dots is a management consulting firm dedicated to creating solutions focused on leadership onboarding and high-performing teams. Connecting your organization's leaders and their teams to measurable objectives is our purpose and passion.

To contact us email at info@connectthedotsconsulting.com or call at 1.877.793.8805 or visit our website at www.connectthedotsconsulting.com

Strategy 3: Feedback

As Mistake #4 showed, overestimating yourself is a sure way to derail. But so often new leaders don't see themselves acting this way. Gathering and acting on early feedback let new leaders know if they are on target or not. They have evidence and examples that help them understand what they should keep doing and what they should stop doing.

Summary

Thoughtful and well-planned strategies are the key to a successful transition to any new job. Although you can't anticipate every potential barrier or problem, if you are focused on blending the learning with the doing and employ the model of knowledge, relationships and feedback, you will be way ahead of the pack and ready to hit the ground running.

Calendar of Events

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