



YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS

A field guide for the newly promoted leader — command yourself first, then the team.

You just got the team. Congratulations — and steady. The first 90 days are not about proving you deserved the job. They are about building the two things every unit runs on: trust in you, and clarity about the standard. This guide breaks it into three 30-day missions.

THE ONE RULE THAT GOVERNS ALL 90 DAYS

Command yourself first. Every mistake new leaders make — talking too much, deciding too fast, performing confidence they do not feel — comes from skipping this. You cannot read a team while you are busy managing your own image. Protect your energy, know your baseline, and the rest of this guide gets ten times easier.

THE 90-DAY MAP

DAYS 1-30	Listen & Learn	Earn the read. Make no big changes.
DAYS 31-60	Set the Standard	Name what good looks like. Fix one thing.
DAYS 61-90	Build the Team	Delegate for real. Develop your people.

LISTEN & LEARN

Your only mission: earn an accurate read of the unit.

01 **Run one-on-ones with every person.**

Three questions: What should I keep doing? What should I change? What do you need from me that you are not getting? Write the answers down in front of them.

02 **Find the informal leaders.**

Every team has people others check with before they act. You need to know who they are before you change anything.

03 **Watch the energy, not just the output.**

Who is running hot? Who has gone quiet? Quiet is data.

04 **Make no big changes yet.**

You get one honeymoon. Spend it learning, not redecorating. The exception: anything unsafe or corrosive gets fixed on day one.

05 **Tell them who you are.**

Your working style, your non-negotiables, how to bring you bad news. They are reading you harder than you are reading them.

30-day checkpoint: Can you name each person's strength, drain, and one goal? If not, keep listening.

SET THE STANDARD

Clarity is a gift. Vagueness is a tax the whole team pays.

01 Name what good looks like.

One page, out loud, to everyone at once: the standard for how this team works, communicates, and treats each other. Invite pushback once — then it is the standard.

02 Fix ONE visible thing.

Pick the obstacle your one-on-ones surfaced most, and remove it publicly. One real fix buys more trust than ten speeches.

03 Have the overdue conversation.

Whatever underperformance or friction the last leader tolerated — address it privately, directly, and with respect. The team is watching whether the standard is real.

04 Start the huddle rhythm.

Short, regular, on purpose. (Grab the free 10 Huddle Prompts tool on the site.)

05 Guard your baseline.

This is the month new leaders burn out — the performing is constant. Schedule recovery like it is an order, because it is.

60-day checkpoint: Could every person on the team state the standard without you in the room?

BUILD THE TEAM

Your success metric changes: it is no longer what you do — it is what they can do without you.

01 Delegate something real.

Not busywork — something with weight, matched to the person's strength from your one-on-ones. Then let them do it their way.

02 Develop your bench.

Give your informal leaders formal reps: running the huddle, owning a project, briefing up the chain.

03 Bridge the personality gap.

Pair your quiet-depth people with your outer-reach people deliberately. Both get stronger. (The free Team Read tool maps this.)

04 Ask for the read on YOU.

Same three questions from day one, aimed at yourself: keep, change, need. Proof the standard applies to you too.

05 Plan past 90.

What does this team need to be capable of in a year? Start building it now — quietly, one person at a time.

90-day checkpoint: the team runs on the standard, not on your presence. That is command.

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