

THE NEW LEADER SUCCESS GUIDE. YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS.

1. PREPARE YOURSELF MENTALLY

Transitioning into a new leadership position requires a fundamental shift in your mindset. You must actively let go of your old responsibilities and fully welcome the new challenges ahead. Ask yourself: **How do I need to think or act differently?**

CORE CLARITY CHECKLIST

- Role Clarity:** Deeply understand the role, team dynamics, and overall organisational structure.
- Accountability:** Establish absolute clarity on both your personal accountabilities and your team's
- Expectations:** Align early with key stakeholders on what success looks like in the first 90 days.

2. ACCELERATING YOUR LEARNING JOURNEY

To avoid the "action imperative" (the trap of rushing to make decisions before understanding the business), you must implement a rigorous learning agenda. Structure your inquiries across three dimensions:

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAST

Performance:

How has the organization performed historically? How were goals set (internal vs. external benchmarks), and what behaviors did these measures encourage or discourage?

Root Causes:

If performance was good, what drove it (strategy, culture, politics, or technical capabilities)? If poor, where do the structural or strategic misalignments lie?

History of Change:

What previous change efforts were made, what were the outcomes, and who was instrumental in shaping them?



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2. ACCELERATING YOUR LEARNING JOURNEY CONT.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PRESENT

Vision vs. Reality:

What is the stated strategy, and is the organization genuinely pursuing it? Is it capable of driving future success?

People & Power:

Who is capable and trustworthy? Who holds the true influence within the organisation and why?

Processes:

Are core workflows performing acceptably regarding quality, reliability, and timelines?

Landmines:

What lurking cultural or political surprises could detonate and push you off track?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Challenges & Opportunities:

Where will the business face the stiffest challenges in the coming year? What are the most promising unexploited growth opportunities?

Barriers & Culture:

What are the technical, cultural, or political barriers to making necessary changes? Which cultural elements should be preserved, and which must evolve?

THE 5-QUESTION 1-ON-1 FRAMEWORK

When meeting with managers, teams, peers, and key stakeholders, ask everyone the same five questions to extract patterns and actionable insights:

1. What are the biggest challenges the organization is facing (or will face) in the near future?
2. Why is the organization facing these challenges?
3. What are the most promising unexploited opportunities for growth?
4. What would need to happen for the organization to exploit the potential of these opportunities?
5. If you were me, what would you focus attention on?

3. MATCHING STRATEGY TO SITUATION: THE STARS MODEL

Your leadership strategy must fit your specific business context. The **STaRS** framework identifies five primary organizational states, each requiring a tailored approach and mindset:

Situation	Priorities & Actions	Leadership Mindset
1. Start-up	Clarify mission/vision, recruit and onboard key players rapidly, establish scalable structures and processes.	Founder–Architect Everything you do sets a precedent.
2. Turnaround	Diagnose issues fast, take decisive action to cut losses/stabilize cash flow, signal extreme urgency.	Crisis Manager Swift, visible moves restore credibility.
3. Accelerated Growth	Build scalable infrastructure, delegate and empower teams to avoid bottlenecks, preserve core culture.	Scaler–Builder Channel momentum safely.
4. Realignment	Listen and learn first to find hidden decline, create urgency to break through denial, re-energize talent.	Truth-Teller & Motivator Rally the team to see the gaps.
5. Sustaining Success	Respect the legacy and existing strengths, identify optimization/innovation areas, prevent complacency.	Steward–Innovator Protect strengths, prepare for future.

4. ASSESSING VULNERABILITIES & PROBLEM PREFERENCES

Highly skilled leaders often fail because they resist learning from mistakes or lean too heavily into their comfort zones. Be aware of Defensive Reasoning (blaming external factors instead of examining your own role) and Limited Introspection due to past successes.

Map your intrinsic interest (from 1 to 10) across the problem-solving grid to discover your functional and situational vulnerabilities:

Function	Technical	Political	Cultural	Total Focus
Human Resources				
Finance				
Marketing				
Operations				
R&D				

Warning: Watch out for your strengths they can make you vulnerable by tempting you to micromanage comfortable areas while neglecting critical blind spots.

5. BLUEPRINT FOR THE FIRST 90 DAYS:

To avoid common transition traps, do not try to change everything at once. Build a structured roadmap and ensure your early wins align directly with what matters to your manager and the organizational culture.

THE 5-QUESTION 1-ON-1 FRAMEWORK

Day 1: Initial orientation, core alignment, and setting an open, learning-focused tone.

Week 1: Meet managers, teams, and peers using the 5-Question Framework. Study initial data, financial metrics, and core workflows.

Month 1: Identify influencers, understand the unwritten rules, determine resource gaps, and select high-impact, low-risk early wins.

Month 2: Create the detailed business blueprint, map out vision/strategy, establish SMART goals, and secure sign-offs from your manager.

Month 3: Implement waves of change, establish robust feedback loops, assign clear accountabilities, and celebrate initial milestones.



WHY INVEST IN EXECUTIVE MENTORING?

Today's leaders face more complexity than ever before. They are expected to:

- ✓ Drive and own the strategy
- ✓ Lead organisational change
- ✓ Make confident commercial decisions
- ✓ Build high-performing teams
- ✓ Retain and develop talented people
- ✓ Deliver sustainable business growth

Executive Mentoring provides the independent support, strategic challenge and commercial perspective that enables leaders—and businesses to thrive. Because stronger leaders build stronger businesses.

WHY PATRICK MALONEY?

Patrick Maloney is Founder and Managing Director of Lead Talent and has spent more than 35 years helping businesses unlock sustainable, profitable growth. As former UK Managing Director of one of the UK's top five staffing groups, Patrick understands the realities of executive leadership because he's led businesses himself. Proven Commercial Impact

- 35+ Years of senior leadership experience
- 60+ Businesses supported across the UK
- 90+ Senior Leaders mentored
- £250m+ Additional Client Profit generated

Patrick works as a trusted strategic partner to business owners, Boards and senior leadership teams—bringing strategic clarity, commercial insight and practical accountability.

TRUSTED BY BUSINESS LEADERS

A strategic partner who gets under the skin of your business.

"Patrick helped us create structure, succession and strategic focus. Three years later we've achieved a 50% increase in turnover, improved staff retention by 35% and developed the next generation of leaders."

Managing Director

Patrick became an integral partner in our growth.

"Patrick helped transform my vision into a clear growth strategy. Today we've built a team of over 10 people and continue to enjoy sustained year-on-year growth. His commercial insight and strategic mentoring have been invaluable."

Founder & Managing Director

Patrick gave me the confidence to succeed at Board level.

"Patrick transformed the way I think strategically, helping me step back from day-to-day operations and contribute with greater confidence and impact as a Director."

Newly Appointed Managing Director

INVEST IN THE LEADERS WHO WILL SHAPE YOUR BUSINESS

The businesses that thrive tomorrow are investing in leadership today.

If you'd value an independent perspective on your leadership team, succession plans or the development of your future leaders, I would be delighted to have an informal, confidential conversation. **Give me a call on 07715 326 502.**

Patrick Maloney

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