



Connected  
Commons



Leadership

# Adapting Networks & Collaborative Practices to Thrive in a Role Transition



# Role Transitions Are Frequent ... Unfortunately Many Skilled Employees Fail



## Role Transitions

Entry into an organization, rotation assignments, expanded responsibilities and promotion all place significant demands on an individual that can only be met by adapting the network.

- Average tenure now under 4 years with millennials closer to 2.
  - Often knowledge workers under-perform or have a longer on-ramp than expected due to lack of attention paid to networks.
- With flatter organizational structures peoples' time within a give level has increased roughly 30%
  - Transitions between levels much more demanding due to larger scope of roles – a little under half of leaders underperform.
  - Functional, cultural and political landscapes in new roles also dramatically affect success and require new networks.

# Invisible Network Traps Often De-Rail Even The Most Skilled Talent ...



The often self-imposed pressure to produce in a new role results in successful people falling into one of 4 network traps :

- The Bottleneck
- The Formalist
- The Biased Learner
- The Disconnected Expert

# Surge, then Adapt, to Prevent Collaborative Overload



## On Entry, Surge Into Role for Ties & Learning

- Attend meetings and listen
- Reach out to build non-insular network
- Hold frequent 1:1s with direct reports and team members

## 6-9 months In, Adapt for Efficiency & Focus

- Delegate by matching the work to the network.
- Develop others: bring people in then back out and coach
- Clarify priorities, invest where you add value, block time accordingly
- Be a connector, not a bottleneck

## Transitions Are A Fact of Life ...



### DO

- ✓ Build the capability of others. Invest early with a style that lets you back out and use all talent
- ✓ Understand and leverage the informal network
- ✓ Seek input to maintain / develop needed skills
- ✓ Listen to a diverse pool of people

### DO NOT

- X Set patterns for overload
- X Over-value formal leaders
- X Rely too heavily on expertise that got you to role
- X Allow insularity or bias to creep into network