



Effectively
Managing
Transitions

ENGAGE

Simultaneously Build Your Network *and* Cultivate Your Reputation Through Early Accomplishment

PRINCIPLE

Invest heavily in network development *and* in pursuing a few notable wins in the early months in a new role. People who succeed in a high-visibility project, do good work on a network-expanding assignment, or solve a problem for a team or client build needed ties *and* a positive reputation.



“As obvious as it sounds, you have to demonstrate your value by doing good work. You deliver results and you forge connections with people who also get stuff done and who appreciate the work. Then, they will reach out to you in the future.”

MANAGING TRANSITIONS

Entry into a new organization, changing roles, new responsibilities and promotion all place demands on you that can most efficiently be met by leveraging networks. Make transitions successful by investing in networks in three ways:

Initiate

Jumpstart productivity and inclusion by cultivating essential connections broadly and before you need help from others.

Engage

Energize people in your network and pull colleagues to you and your ideas when engaging with new groups.

Refine

Re-calibrate networks and collaborative practices for long-term effectiveness and well-being.

In role transitions—particularly into new organizations or groups—people often focus on *either* driving results *or* becoming well-known. The more effective strategy is to find a balance between network development and building a reputation through select, early accomplishments. People who do this well pursue a few early wins with network development in mind.

Making concerted effort to simultaneously build relationships and accomplish work that is valued creates an intense ramp-up time for newcomers. However, our research shows it is an approach that speeds up integration into the organization and creates a network foundation for future success. Coming into a new role, you can build your reputation for execution in several ways:

- **Commit to a high-profile project.** Whether it is assigned directly or you craft the project to achieve your goals, good work that gets broad attention naturally builds your network and reputation. Engage a broad network of influencers and contributors to ensure the outcome meets stakeholders’ needs.
- **Turn projects into network-expanding assignments.** Leverage the work to build your network in authentic ways. Speak to multiple stakeholders to understand the scope; follow-up with a demo or prototype. Showing (rather than just talking about) results builds trust and makes clear how your expertise can be applied.
- **Remove obstacles and pain points.** Address other people’s concerns or tackle challenges early on. By removing roadblocks and helping them find solutions, you establish credibility and generate good will.

Naomi was selected to lead an initiative to re-position marketing for a global business unit. She immersed herself in the role, tapping into a broad group of stakeholders, creating an expanded team with diverse interests and expertise, and seeking advice, resources and input from senior leaders. In four months, the plan she presented was approved, and the relationships she built paid off later when she was the clear candidate for a sought-after international assignment. Similarly, Tyler focused his first few months on building both technical skill and the relationships that would lead to future work. “Now, I am asked to join projects because someone heard that I did something for another team.”

When Ken stepped into a new role, he focused on challenges and steps to solve them. With his team he asked, “If you could change one thing to make you more excited about coming to work, what would that be?” With peers and internal clients, he helped work through options and solutions. “If they go back and something we talked about resolves a pain point, I have built that connection and credibility. That person is going to come to me the next 10 times.”

By showing what you can do and delivering on commitments, you start to build trust. The skills you learn, the expertise you demonstrate and the network you build open doors to subsequent assignments via a strong reputation.



MAKE A PLAN TO BUILD TIES AND SET REPUTATION

Relationship building *and* doing good work create a positive reputation. By being attentive to both work and your network during your first 6-9 months in a new role, you plant seeds which will benefit your career over the long term. When coming in to a new role or project, clarify your focus: *What could be an early win?* Then, map out who will benefit, who you should involve to build your network and a plan to proceed.

IDENTIFY A POSSIBLE “EARLY WIN” PROJECT. This could be an important assignment you have been given, a problem you have identified or a high-visibility effort you could contribute to. Ideally, your project will require integration across levels, functions and capabilities. When an initial project requires you to reach out across groups and understand diverse areas, you begin to build an effective, valuable network.

CLARIFY WHO WILL BENEFIT AND HOW	EXPAND YOUR THINKING TO THE BROADER NETWORK	INVOLVE/INFORM STAKEHOLDERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write down people or groups that have an interest in a positive outcome.• List pain points you hope to solve or benefits to create.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write down people or groups that may have expertise or resources that could be relevant or adapted.• List other customers, functions or work streams that could benefit from a similar output or solution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write down specific ways to bring in and engage stakeholders (1:1 meetings, problem-solving sessions, written updates, getting feedback on a demo or prototype, etc.).• List additional touchpoints or timeframes to gain input, share information or make changes.
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NETWORK TIPS

- **Look for needs that have been overlooked or connections between groups that have not been made.** Sometimes solutions are simple, but others have been unable to give the problem attention. Or, you may see a way to broker ideas across groups. You earn respect and trust from clients and co-workers by filling in a gap and responding to a need.
- **Create something to show and engage others with.** When you have a prototype, tool or demo to show and talk about, your discussion focuses on helping people imagine how it can be used or adapted in their world. You build trust in your capability.
- **Add a side project that showcases your personality and passion.** You expand others’ idea of what you can do and gain a reputation for work you enjoy.