

New Manager Survival Checklist

Your Essential Guide to Thriving (Not Just Surviving) in Your First 90 Days

How to Use This Checklist

This checklist is designed to help you navigate your first 90 days as a manager with confidence. Each item includes a brief explanation of why it matters and how to execute it effectively.

✓ **Check off each item as you complete it**

 **Suggested timeline: Complete within first 90 days**

 **Focus: Build credibility while establishing your management foundation**

Week 1-2: Foundation Setting

Team Relationships

- ☐ **Schedule 1-on-1 meetings with each team member**
Purpose: Understand their goals, concerns, and working styles. Ask: "What do you need from me to be successful?"
- ☐ **Learn everyone's preferred communication style**
Purpose: Some prefer email, others face-to-face. Adapting early builds trust quickly.
- ☐ **Identify your team's current priorities and deadlines**
Purpose: Avoid disrupting critical work while you're learning. Ask: "What can't be delayed?"

Stakeholder Mapping

- ☐ **Meet with your manager to clarify expectations**
Purpose: Understand success metrics, communication preferences, and support available.

- ☐ **Identify key internal partners (other departments)**
Purpose: Know who your team depends on and who depends on your team.
- ☐ **Understand your team's reputation and relationships**
Purpose: Learn the history so you can build on strengths and address any issues.

Week 3-4: Systems & Processes

Operational Understanding

- ☐ **Document current team processes and workflows**
Purpose: Understand how work gets done (and why) before making any changes.
- ☐ **Learn your budget and resource constraints**
Purpose: Know what you can and cannot promise your team.
- ☐ **Understand performance review and goal-setting processes**
Purpose: Be prepared for formal evaluation conversations.

Communication Rhythms

- ☐ **Establish regular team meeting cadence**
Purpose: Consistent communication prevents most problems. Start weekly, adjust as needed.
- ☐ **Set up recurring 1-on-1s with each team member**
Purpose: Individual attention builds trust and catches issues early.
- ☐ **Create your manager communication schedule**
Purpose: Proactive updates prevent micromanagement and build confidence in your abilities.

Notes / Adjustments from Month 1

Month 2: Building Credibility

Quick Wins

- ☐ **Identify and solve one process inefficiency**
Purpose: Show immediate value without disrupting major systems.
- ☐ **Recognize team members publicly for their contributions**
Purpose: Build goodwill and show you notice good work.
- ☐ **Remove one obstacle that's been frustrating your team**
Purpose: Demonstrate that you'll advocate for them and take action.

Skill Development

- ☐ **Practice giving constructive feedback**
Purpose: Start with small issues to build your confidence before bigger conversations.
- ☐ **Learn to delegate one task effectively**
Purpose: Free up your time while developing team members' skills.
- ☐ **Handle your first difficult conversation**
Purpose: Address issues early before they become bigger problems.

Notes / Adjustments from Month 2

Month 3: Establishing Your Leadership Style

Team Development

- ☐ **Create individual development plans with each team member**
Purpose: Show investment in their growth and align their goals with team needs.
- ☐ **Implement one team improvement based on feedback**
Purpose: Demonstrate that you listen and act on team input.
- ☐ **Successfully navigate a team conflict or challenge**
Purpose: Prove you can handle difficult situations with fairness and professionalism.

Strategic Thinking

- ☐ **Present your 90-day observations and recommendations**
Purpose: Show your manager you're thinking strategically about team improvement.
- ☐ **Set team goals for the next quarter**
Purpose: Demonstrate forward-thinking and ability to translate company goals to team level.
- ☐ **Build one new cross-functional relationship**
Purpose: Expand your influence and create opportunities for your team.

Notes / Adjustments from Month 3

Emergency Situations Toolkit

When Things Go Wrong:

- ☐ **Know who to escalate to for different types of problems**
- ☐ **Have a plan for covering team responsibilities if someone is out**
- ☐ **Understand your authority limits for decisions and spending**
- ☐ **Know your company's policies for performance issues and HR situations**

Self-Care & Sustainability

- ☐ **Establish boundaries between work and personal time**
- ☐ **Find a mentor or peer support network**
- ☐ **Schedule regular check-ins with yourself to assess stress levels**
- ☐ **Celebrate your wins (even small ones!)**

Your 90-Day Success Scorecard

Rate Your Progress (1-5 scale):

- **Team Trust & Relationships:** ____/5
- **Operational Understanding:** ____/5
- **Communication Effectiveness:** ____/5
- **Problem-Solving Confidence:** ____/5
- **Strategic Contribution:** ____/5

Total Score: ____/25

Score Interpretation:

- **20-25:** Excellent foundation! You're ready for advanced management challenges.
- **15-19:** Strong progress with some areas to strengthen.
- **10-14:** Good start, but focus on your lowest-scoring areas.
- **Below 10:** Consider getting additional support or mentoring.

What's Next?

Completing this checklist puts you ahead of 80% of new managers who learn by trial and error. But your real growth happens when you move from surviving to thriving.

The difference between managers who struggle and those who excel isn't talent - it's having the right support and strategies at the right time.

Ready to accelerate your management growth beyond survival mode?

Let's discuss how personalized coaching can help you build unshakeable confidence and see real results in your team's performance.

Book a free 15-minute Discovery Call to learn how you can create your personalized management acceleration plan.

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Bonus: Common New Manager Mistakes to Avoid

- **Trying to be everyone's friend** - Be friendly, but maintain professional boundaries
- **Making changes too quickly** - Observe and understand before implementing
- **Avoiding difficult conversations** - Address issues early before they escalate
- **Micromanaging** - Trust your team while staying informed
- **Taking on too much yourself** - Delegate and develop others
- **Not asking for help** - Seeking support shows wisdom, not weakness