

# Onboarding: Surviving Your Next Leadership Transition

Steve Gladis, Ph.D.

# Survey Questions

- Our company has a well-developed executive onboarding process:
  - Yes No
- I have witnessed a poor executive onboarding in the past 5 years:
  - Yes No

# Introduction

- Stories of George & Jack
  - “Gentle” George—Senior Exec
  - “Jackhammer” Jack—New CEO
- Issue: Many exec transitions fail
  - 40-50% fail in the first year
  - 28% new execs decide in 1<sup>st</sup> week
  - 69% w/onboarding stay after 3 years
  - Cost: As high as \$2.7 M
  - Executive Transition Tsunami

# Structured Onboarding Program

1. Engage Human Resources
2. Discuss Reasonable Expectations
3. Appoint a Mentor
4. Hire an Executive Coach

# 1. Engage Human Resources

- Onboarding before recruitment!
  - Have onboarding process in place
  - Start with best practices, research
- Following hiring process
  - Engage HR/OD as a Business Partner
  - HR/OD: Drive Onboarding Process
    - Hiring Coaches
    - Assigning Mentors
    - Scheduling Assimilation Meetings

## 2. Discuss Reasonable Expectations

### Early talks w/ new exec's boss

- Advice: Hit the ground listening
  - Give exec permission to listen
  - NOT “shake things up”
- Discuss the Invisible
  - Management philosophy and style
  - History & reputation of position and unit
  - **Culture**

## 3. Appoint a Mentor

- Trusted Other
  - Offer several choices
  - Let new executive choose
- Volunteer
  - Not in same division
- Politically Savvy
  - Wise
  - Well respected

## 4. Hire an Executive Coach

- Be a safe harbor—sounding board
- Identify key stakeholders
- Conduct assimilation meetings
- Take the transition's temperature
- Moderate check-in meetings w/ boss
- Be there—through ups and downs



# Contact Us

- Steve Gladis Leadership Partners  
George Mason Enterprise Center  
4031 University Dr., Fairfax, VA 22030
- Steve Gladis, Ph.D.
  - [sgladis@stevegladis.com](mailto:sgladis@stevegladis.com)
  - [www.stevegladis.com](http://www.stevegladis.com)
  - Latest Book: [Positive Leadership](#)
  - 703.424.3780