



DO BUSINESS FASTER™

Jim's Profit Accelerator 189 Onboarding Senior Executives

"Onboarding" is HR-speak for introducing an employee to her next job. It often emphasizes necessary mechanics (structure, meetings, basic job tasks) but stops short. What's missing is a guided look ahead to frame early performance expectations and objectives. Somehow that is often delayed "until she gets her feet on the ground." Wrong.

Beyond listening kindly and answering frankly, the supervisor's job is to help move key responsibilities to the new kid's lap. Quickly.

My wife taught English to high school sophomores. She was consciously tough on her students the first 60 or so days, explaining that the first interchanges set the tone for the rest of the year. She could soften up a bit later, guided by the behavior of the class. To make her point, she would stand next to a troublemaker and conduct class from that position. You can imagine the result.

SPEED BUMP: Set short-term goals immediately with new folks.

Here are basic first steps. They are designed to elicit discussion by the end of her first week. This can help you see how she sees her job and introduce a frank conversation about what works and what needs adjustment. That frankness will serve you both well. (We'll use "her" to include "him/her"):

1. Ask her to write her initial job description (first 30 or 60 days), just responsibilities, with up to five tasks. Ask for a personal review of this document with you within a week. It will give you a window into how well your person understands her job and enable your first discussion about what's needed and why.
2. Be absolutely prepared and dead on time for this first meeting. Don't move or adjust it unless the building is on fire (literally).
3. Use questions to help you understand her perspective (your main goal). You can sharpen the goals later. Right now, your task is to learn how to communicate well with this essential person. Weak communication now will cripple your willingness to delegate and demand high performance in the future.
4. Then discuss initial tasks to clarify what each of you wants in the job. Real examples make for better discussion than hypotheticals do.
5. Ask her to write what she'll accomplish the first week and first month. Describe in outcomes, not inputs.

6. Ask her what will help her.
7. Ask her what she worries about.
8. Schedule a weekly update with her, maximum 30 minutes, with standard agenda.
9. Delegate aggressively. It's easier to help her with a task that she is still learning than to ask her to learn either by watching you or by doing part of the job.
10. Check on work quality aggressively the first three months.

ACCELERANT: Try the above on one of your best and one of your weakest people.

For more information on how you can accelerate revenues and profits in your business, please call or email me.

A note on **SPEED BUMPS:** Use them to click quickly with an idea that can immediately be implemented in your life as a business leader. Think: "How can I use this today?" or "Who can use this?"

For more information, visit www.grewco.com.

Jim Grew, the Business Defogger and Accelerator, helps leaders discover hidden opportunities within their businesses and exploit them for dramatic results. Jim has led 9 businesses, worked in 31 companies at C-level, and is an expert in strategy and executive leadership. He presents regularly to industry groups, mentors business leaders, and shares insights in his Executive Letter (above). Jim holds BA and MBA degrees from Stanford University. In his new book, *The Other Side of Succession*, he shares how to plan for the future by growing your business now.

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