



PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP  
SERIES

A GUIDE FOR  
NEW MANAGERS

# THE 90-DAY LEADERSHIP TRANSITION BLUEPRINT™

## How New Managers Become Trusted Leaders

A practical four-phase roadmap  
for building trust, creating clarity,  
and generating momentum in  
your first 90 days.



**LISTEN**  
DAYS 1–30



**CLARIFY**  
DAYS 31–45



**ALIGN**  
DAYS 46–60



**ACT**  
DAYS 61–90



Build Confidence.



Earn Trust.



Create Impact.

BASED ON

*Now That I'm a Manager, What Do I DO Next?*

BY ISAAC WAMBUA

## WELCOME

# Leadership Is Not a Promotion Problem. It's a Transition Problem.

You've been promoted. That decision was someone's bet on your judgment, your work ethic, and your ability to get results. The question now is whether you understand what changed when the title did.

The skills that earned the promotion are not the skills that will help you succeed in the role.

As an individual contributor, success was measured by what you accomplished. As a leader, success is measured by what your team accomplishes because of you.

That is a different job. The transition will feel like several different jobs — exciting, overwhelming, and uncertain — sometimes all at once.

**Successful leadership transitions follow a predictable pattern.**

This guide walks through the four phases that help new managers build trust, create clarity, gain alignment, and generate momentum during the first ninety days.

WHY TRANSITIONS FAIL

Most New Managers Fail for the Same Reasons.

Leadership transitions fail for predictable reasons. Most have nothing to do with talent. They have to do with the gap between the role someone was hired into and the role they're now expected to play.

New managers consistently:

|                                                |                                             |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 01 Try to prove themselves instead of learning | 02 Seek approval instead of earning respect |
| 03 Avoid the difficult conversations           | 04 Continue doing instead of delegating     |
| 05 Solve every problem personally              | 06 Confuse activity with leadership         |
| 07 Focus on tasks instead of people            | 08 Lead from urgency instead of intention   |

Leadership is not a title change.

Leadership is an identity change.

The sooner you understand that distinction, the faster you grow.

THE FOUR PHASES

Listen. Clarify. Align. Act.



|                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>PHASE 1 · LISTEN · DAYS 1-30</b></p> <p>Understand the people, culture, processes, and pressure points.<br/>Resist the urge to act before you understand.</p> | <p><b>PHASE 2 · CLARIFY · DAYS 31-45</b></p> <p>Define priorities, establish expectations, and create direction.<br/>Clarity is the substrate of execution.</p> |
| <p><b>PHASE 3 · ALIGN · DAYS 46-60</b></p> <p>Build trust, strengthen relationships, and create buy-in.<br/>Alignment converts clarity into commitment.</p>         | <p><b>PHASE 4 · ACT · DAYS 61-90</b></p> <p>Execute with focus, develop ownership, and generate momentum.<br/>This is where leadership becomes visible.</p>     |

Each phase builds on the previous one. Skipping a phase creates resistance. Following the sequence creates confidence.

PHASE 01 · LISTEN

PHASE 01 · DAYS 1-30

Listen.

Learn Before You Lead.

Most new managers feel pressure to make immediate changes. Your first responsibility is understanding the people, the culture, the processes, and the pressure points that shape the work you’ve inherited.

The most effective new managers spend the first thirty days listening more than they speak. Listen across six categories:

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>PEOPLE</b></p> <p>Who are your strongest contributors?<br/>Who influences others the most?<br/>Who needs support?</p> | <p><b>CULTURE</b></p> <p>What behaviors are rewarded?<br/>What values are actually practiced?</p>                                              |
| <p><b>PROCESSES</b></p> <p>What systems work well?<br/>What creates frustration?</p>                                        | <p><b>EXPECTATIONS</b></p> <p>What does success look like?<br/>Who defines success?</p>                                                        |
| <p><b>RELATIONSHIPS</b></p> <p>Which partnerships matter most?<br/>Where does collaboration break down?</p>                 | <p><b>PRESSURE POINTS</b></p> <p>What challenges create stress for the team?<br/>What’s been “the way it is” longer than anyone remembers?</p> |

ONE OPERATING MOVE THIS WEEK

In every one-on-one this week, ask two questions: *What is working well?* and *What is frustrating?* Write the answers down. Patterns surface after the third or fourth conversation.

## PHASE 01 · LISTENING QUESTIONS

# The Six Questions That Surface The Real Issues.

Two short scripts. One for your team. One for your manager. Use them in your first thirty days. They are designed to surface patterns you can act on.

### Questions for Your Team

- What is working well?
  - What is frustrating?
  - What should never change?
  - What needs improvement?
  - What support would help you most?
- 
- If you were in my position, what would you focus on first?

### Questions for Your Manager/Boss

- What does success look like in my first 90 days?
  - What concerns you most about this team?
  - What should I learn quickly?
  - What expectations should I prioritize?
- 
- How can I best support you?

PHASE 02 · CLARIFY

PHASE 02 · DAYS 31-45

Clarify.

Clarity Creates Confidence.

Most performance problems are clarity problems in disguise. People cannot commit to what they do not understand. Your role in this phase is to reduce confusion and increase alignment around five things: priorities, expectations, roles, communication, and success measures.

The 15-Second Vision Formula

Great leaders don't leave people wondering what matters. In fifteen seconds or less, they reinforce four essential messages every time they lead a team meeting, one-on-one, or project update.

|                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>QUESTION 01</p> <p><b>Here's where we're going.</b></p> <p><i>Provide direction.</i></p>         | <p>QUESTION 02</p> <p><b>Here's why it matters.</b></p> <p><i>Provide purpose.</i></p>                          |
|                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                 |
| <p>QUESTION 03</p> <p><b>Here's what we need to focus on.</b></p> <p><i>Provide priorities.</i></p> | <p>QUESTION 04</p> <p><b>Here's how your work contributes to our vision.</b></p> <p><i>Provide meaning.</i></p> |

ONE OPERATING MOVE THIS WEEK

Pick one recurring meeting. Open it with the 15-Second Vision Formula. Track whether the conversation that follows is more focused than the week before. People support what they understand.

PHASE 03 · ALIGN

PHASE 03 · DAYS 46-60

# Align.

Alignment Turns Clarity into Commitment.

Knowing the plan is not enough. People have to believe in the plan. Alignment is built on trust, and trust rests on three pillars. Competence, Character, and Care. All three are expressed on a tool we call the Credibility Triangle.

## THE CREDIBILITY TRIANGLE

Three Qualities. One Foundation: TRUST.



### Alignment Questions to Ask Yourself

- Do my team members trust me?
  - Do they understand where we are going?
  - Do they know what success looks like?
  - Do they believe I care about them?
- 
- Do they understand their role in achieving the vision?

## PHASE 04 · ACT

PHASE 04 · DAYS 61-90

# Act.

Leadership Becomes Visible Through Action.

This is where leadership becomes visible. During the first 60 days, you built credibility by listening, clarifying expectations, and creating alignment. Now it's time to translate that foundation into consistent action through delegation, coaching, accountability, and purposeful execution.

The goal is no longer to understand the team—it is to develop the team. Your success is measured less by the problems you solve yourself and more by the capability, confidence, and ownership you build in others.

The two frameworks in this phase—the **CLEAR Delegation Framework** and the **TRUST Feedback Framework**—provide practical tools for making that shift. They are designed to guide real conversations that build ownership, strengthen performance, and help your team succeed without becoming dependent on you.

## The CLEAR Delegation Framework.

Great delegation develops people while producing results. CLEAR specifies the five conditions that make delegation work.

# The CLEAR Delegation Framework

Clarify → Limitations → Empower → Align → Review



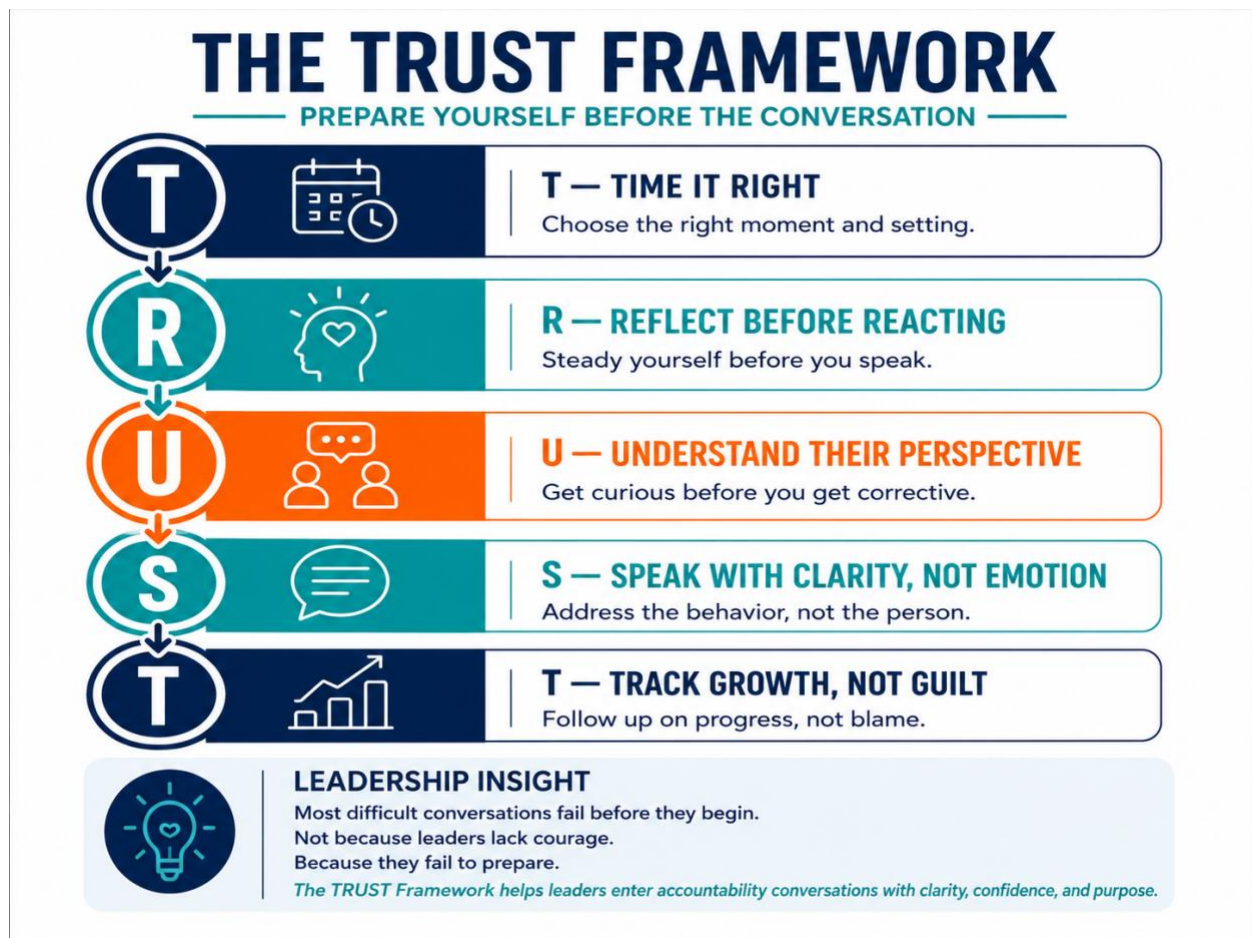
## THE DIAGNOSTIC

When a delegation fails, the cause is almost always one missing step. Identify which one. Fix it. Then run the next delegation through the full framework.

## OPERATING FRAMEWORK

## The TRUST Feedback Framework.

Feedback builds performance only when delivered correctly. TRUST is the operating sequence — five moves that turn feedback into a development tool instead of a confrontation.



SELF-ASSESSMENT

Your 90-Day Leadership Scorecard.

Rate yourself honestly across the ten leadership areas below. The score is not the point — the most important thing is identifying and acting on the gap between where you are and where you need to be. Repeat the assessment at day 30, day 60, and day 90.

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 = Needs Significant Improvement | 5 = Consistently Strong |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|

|                     |                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Listening           | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Clarity             | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Alignment           | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Execution           | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Feedback            | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delegation          | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ownership           | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communication       | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trust               | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Leadership Presence | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |

## REFLECTION + COMMITMENT

# What You Do Next Matters Most.

The score above is information. The commitment below is action. Use the prompts to surface what's already clear — and to commit to the smallest unit of progress that you can sustain.

MY GREATEST LEADERSHIP STRENGTH IS

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MY BIGGEST GROWTH OPPORTUNITY IS

---

THE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR I WILL FOCUS ON NEXT IS

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### YOUR 90-DAY COMMITMENT

**One conversation. One behavior. One action this week.**

*The first conversation I will have:*

---

*The first leadership behavior I will improve:*

---

*The first action I will take this week:*

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## NEXT STEPS

## Your Next Leadership Steps

The **90-Day Leadership Transition Blueprint** is designed to help you navigate your first ninety days with greater clarity and confidence. If you're ready to keep building your leadership capability, these four resources will help you take the next step.

### 01 | Discover Your Leadership Stage

#### Take the Leadership Stage Assessment

In just five minutes, discover the leadership stage you're operating from today, identify your biggest growth opportunities, and receive personalized next-step recommendations delivered directly to your inbox.

[dynamomethods.com/leadershipstage](https://dynamomethods.com/leadershipstage)



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### 02 | Go Deeper with the Complete Framework

#### Read *Now That I'm a Manager, What Do I Do Next?*

Explore the complete leadership framework behind this Blueprint, with practical strategies, real-world examples, and tools to help you make the transition from individual contributor to confident leader.

[dynamomethods.com/books](https://dynamomethods.com/books)

### 03 | Build the Habits with Live Training

#### Attend the From Peer to Leader Workshop

Leadership isn't developed by reading alone. Join a live, interactive workshop where you'll practice the four phases of the Blueprint, strengthen your leadership skills, and leave with practical tools you can apply immediately.

[Academy.dynamomethods.com](https://Academy.dynamomethods.com)

## 04 | Develop Leaders Across Your Organization

### Bring the Blueprint to Your Team

Equip your managers with a consistent leadership system that builds trust, ownership, accountability, and stronger business results. Available as customized workshops, leadership programs, and organizational engagements for teams of ten or more.

[dynamomethods.com/strategy-call](https://dynamomethods.com/strategy-call)

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

##### Isaac Wambua

Founder, Dynamo Methods  
Author of *Now That I'm a Manager*, *What Do I Do Next?*

Isaac Wambua is the founder of Dynamo Methods and a five-time bestselling author. His work focuses on installing the Leadership Operating System and the Dynamo Business Operating System inside growing organizations. Documented client results include **40% reductions in owner involvement within 90 days, sales close rates moving from 18% to 32%, and executive decision load cut in half** — the same operating logic that produces this Blueprint's four-phase transition.