

# You're in Charge: Now What?

## Group Study Guide

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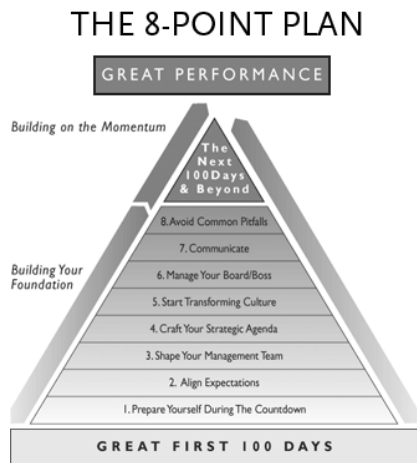
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# You're in Charge: Now What? Study Guide

This document contains discussion questions and exercises to assist your group in studying "You're in Charge: Now What?" by Thomas Neff & James Citrin.

**Theme:** You can maximize your success by ensuring that your first hundred days get off to the right start.



## Note to participant:

This study guide will provide questions to help you apply key ideas in the book to your leadership position or challenge.

## Notes to leader:

- Focus your discussions on how each person can apply the 8-Point Plan to his or her new challenge or leadership role.
- The Self-Assessment Exercise is for each person's personal reflection. Some participants may prefer not to discuss it.
- The Personal Action Plan is an opportunity to form accountability partnerships for those who wish to do so.

## 1-Prepare Yourself During the Countdown ...1

- Absorb Information .....1
- Develop a 100 Day Agenda.....1
- Get in Shape for the Race .....1

## 2-Align Expectations .....2

- Introduce Yourself.....2
- Construct a Shared Reality.....2
- Be a Receiver, Not a Broadcaster .....2
- Establish Winning Conditions during the Change .....3

## 3-Shape Your Team .....4

- Assess Your Potential Team .....4
- Develop a Confidant.....4
- Realize, No One Can Do It Alone.....4

## 4-Craft Your Strategic Agenda.....5

- Know Your Mission .....5
- Establish Your Short-Term Agenda .....5
- Define Operating Mechanisms .....5

## 5-Start Transforming Culture .....6

- Learn the Lay of the Land .....6
- Give an Invitation to Change .....6
- Define Which Aspects of the Culture to Change .....6

## 6-Manage Your Boss .....7

- Understand the Motivations of Your Boss ..7
- Define Your Working Relationship .....7
- Share the Same Reality.....7

## 7-Communicate .....8

- Communicate in Both Directions .....8
- Know Yourself as a Communicator.....8
- Manage Your Implicit Communications.....8
- Structure Your Organization for Optimal Communication .....8

## 8-Avoid Common Pitfalls .....9

## The Next 100 Days and Beyond .....10

## Exercise: Self-assessment .....11

## Exercise: Personal Action Plan.....12

# 1-Prepare Yourself During the Countdown

## *Absorb Information*

- Where can you get information about the organization and its current employees [volunteers], and leaders?
- Who will you need to work closely with to be a success in this new position? What questions will you ask these key constituents?
- Who does the organization serve? Where can you get information about how they view the services and products they are getting from the organization?
- Can you arrange to shadow your predecessor or do an apprenticeship?

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## *Develop a 100 Day Agenda*

- What will be your key focus during this time?
- What key actions will you take?
- Do you have what you need to complete these actions? What training or resources do you need?
- What do you need to do to prepare your family for the intensity of demands that you will have initially with the new position?

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## *Get in Shape for the Race*

- What will you do to increase your physical stamina for the challenge?
  - ▶ What exercise program will you put in place?
  - ▶ What changes will you make to your diet to improve your overall health?
- What will you do to strengthen yourself spiritually?
  - ▶ What Bible reading plan will you put in place?
  - ▶ What improvements will you make to your prayer life?

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## 2-Align Expectations

Before accepting the position, verify that you have common ground on key goals with the person who will be your boss. What are the key goals of your prospective boss? What are your key goals?

### *Introduce Yourself*

- Admit You Don't Have All the Answers:  
What are the key challenges for this organization for which you have no immediate solution?
- Address Doubts and Fear:
  - ▶ In what ways could you walk in the shoes of those in your new organization to gain a better understanding of their challenges?
  - ▶ How will you determine what your new team expects of you and any concerns they have about you?
  - ▶ What will you do to determine how the team views its strengths and challenges?
  - ▶ In what ways could you show respect for your predecessor?

### *Construct a Shared Reality*

- What is your plan for gaining alignment with key constituents regarding the current state of the organization?
- How can you develop a solid support base?
- How clear is the direction of the organization? How clear are each person's roles and responsibilities?

### *Be a Receiver, Not a Broadcaster*

- What will it take for you to use active listening as your key method for learning and building commitment from others? What questions will you ask them?

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**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

- *What are the top three things we should preserve about this ministry?*
- *What are the top three things we should change about this ministry?*
- *How is God blessing you in this ministry?*
- *What are the needs of the people we serve through this ministry?*
- *What advice do you have for me?*
- *What else do you want to discuss?*



### 3-Shape Your Team

#### *Assess Your Potential Team*

- For each key leader, answer:
  - ▶ Does this person have a positive influence on others in the organization? How does this person relate to others in the organization?
  - ▶ To what degree is this person committed to the organization?
- Does your team overall have what it will take to make the necessary changes to the organization?
- What complementary skills do your team leaders possess? How will they blend with yours?

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#### *Develop a Confidant*

- Who have you identified as your trusted revolutionary or brain trust?

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#### *Realize, No One Can Do It Alone*

- For each key leader answer:
  - ▶ What motivates this person?
  - ▶ In ways can I modify my management style when interacting with this person to get the best performance from him/her?
  - ▶ What value can this person bring to the team? How can I help this person see the importance of his/her contributions?
- What can I do to make it clear to the key leaders that we need to be a team and how we can make that happen?
- How can I assert myself in a positive way?

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## 5-Start Transforming Culture

### *Learn the Lay of the Land*

- Who are the five most respected people in your new organization and why are they respected?
- Who are the gatekeepers of important information?

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### *Give an Invitation to Change*

- What incentives can you provide to people who embrace the changes you see as necessary?
- Who have you identified as early adopters of the changes?
- In what ways can you change measures of success so they align with the new culture?
- How can you adjust operating processes to support the culture change?
- To what degree are you modeling the changes you want others to make to their behaviors?

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### *Define Which Aspects of the Culture to Change*

- How have you defined the specific behavioral changes needed to support the culture change?
- What is your plan for communicating the changes?

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## 6-Manage Your Boss

### *Understand the Motivations of Your Boss*

- What is your strategy for being loyal to your boss?
- How will you keep balanced in your conversations with your boss and give good advice rather than be a “yes” person or constant devil’s advocate?
- What is your strategy for making your boss look good?

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### *Define Your Working Relationship*

- How does your boss establish priorities?
- How often does your boss want an update from you?
- What format of updates would be most useful to your boss (written, verbal, formal, fluid)?
- What results or initiatives would make your boss look good?
- How does your boss define success?

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### *Share the Same Reality*

- How will you keep your boss in the loop on key issues?
- How will you let your boss know your concerns and what you think are key priorities?
- How will you make it comfortable for your boss to give you informal feedback?

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## Exercise: Self-assessment

For each statement below, indicate a number from 1-10, where "1" means you strongly disagree and "10" means you strongly agree.

	disagree ————— agree 1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I identify key constituents with whom I need to develop relationships.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
At least four times a week, I spend time in God's Word.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I engage in active listening to learn and build commitment.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I assess my potential team to see how their skills will blend and to see where I need to make changes.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I implement operating mechanism that help leaders be accountable and in alignment.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I model the behaviors that I want to see in others.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I have a strategy for making my boss look good.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I communicate in a way that is meaningful to others.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I manage my implicit communications to send positive signals	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I know the common pitfalls and do my best to avoid them.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Things to Ponder:

- As you carefully consider your responses, which low scoring areas are you ready to address?
- As you consider your responses overall, where will you likely have the biggest struggle?

## Exercise: Personal Action Plan

Create a personal action plan to apply a lesson you learned from this book.

My Lesson to Apply:

My Accountability Partner:

(Person who will ask about my consistency, encourage me, urge me to continue, and praise me for progress)

Specific Behaviors I Commit to Demonstrate as I Apply My Lesson

Behavior	Where	When