



Iwan Thomas Associates

Business Coaching and Management Consultancy

First90 Coaching

An American President has 100 days to settle into office. Most people are allowed only 90. After that, judgments are made, rather than allowances.

The step to Partner is one transition, yet it may be combined with a transition to a new firm. If there is also a move to a new city (and in some cases a new country) not only does the transition for the lawyer become more difficult to manage, but the transition for their family also becomes a major issue.

Yet too many firms adopt a “sink or swim” approach, which while clearly Darwinian will result in casualties, to the cost of the firm and its clients, as well as to the individual lawyer.

A Structured Approach

The work of Michael Watkins of Harvard Business School provides a structure to guide the transition, and our aim is to coach lawyers to help them put this structure into practise.

The basic premise is that difficulties arise from the interaction of a particular individual with a particular situation – this is no “one size fits all” solution. Starting even before the new job commences, the lawyer needs to take a mental step from the old job to the new. They then need to analyse the business position they face. By firm or department is it

- A start up
- A realignment
- A turnaround
- A sustaining success position

Each requires a different approach, and crucially imposes a different timescale.

- Prepare themselves and their new staff before they even start the job
- Gather information about what is *really* going on by asking the right questions to the right people
- Learn the culture of the new department/organisation at top speed
- Make those critical early wins
- Shape their personal impact so that it works for them and not against them
- Negotiate realistic expectations with their boss
- Begin the process of building their team
- Avoid the tempting mistakes – for instance of plunging into the role before they truly know what it is.

An effective transition will benefit both the lawyer and the firm, and will achieve break even earlier.

To arrange a discussion, please call us on 0121 698 2318