



THE EXECUTIVE HANDOVER PLAYBOOK



UMBREX

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First Edition

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Published by Umbrex

Astoria, NY

Book design by Umbrex Consulting LLC

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-961779-12-9

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For Vice Admiral Richard A. Correll, USN

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Introduction

The idea for this playbook came about on June 9, 2023, when I had the privilege of attending the change of command ceremony at which Rear Adm. Brian L. Davies was relieved as Commander, Submarine Group Two.

The keynote speaker that day was Vice Adm. Richard A. Correll, deputy commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, and in the audience was Retired Rear Adm. Joseph A. Walsh, the former Commander of Submarine Group Two.

The day was particularly special to me because three decades ago, Brian Davies was my fellow junior officer on the USS HYMAN G RICKOVER (SSN-709), Rich Correll was our Navigator and Operations Officer, and Joe Walsh was our Commanding Officer.

As I observed the proceedings, surrounded by distinguished and highly decorated naval officers, I reflected on how well transitions at every level are managed in the Navy, where I spent five years.

Each time the commanding officer of a ship is relieved, an entire binder of checklists gets filled out so that the incoming officer has complete information on the state of the ship, including all known deficiencies.

Prior to the relief happening, the incoming officer and the outgoing officer will review these checklists with the squadron commodore.

This process takes place at each level in the chain of command.

When I took on my first division officer role and relieved the Reactor Controls Assistant, I reviewed all the training records, the maintenance records, and the personnel records for each sailor in my new division, using the standard set of division officer handover checklists.

In my twenty years as a management consultant, working with hundreds of clients, rarely have I seen any company with such a rigorous system.

1: Organization

1.1 Team

- Contact Information:** Compile contact information for each team member, including phone numbers, email addresses, and preferred communication methods.
- Personnel File Review:** Go through the personnel file of each individual on the team, understanding their work history, roles, responsibilities, and any significant past assignments.
- Current Role and Responsibilities:** Review the current role and responsibilities of each team member, including a detailed list of their regular recurring activities (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly) and their involvement in ongoing projects.
- Professional Development Goals:** Discuss the professional development goals of each team member, understanding their career aspirations and growth plans within the organization.
- Performance Review History:** Review past performance reviews of each team member, noting strengths, areas for improvement, and any progress made over time.
- Promotions and Career Pathway:** Discuss any expected promotions or career progression opportunities for each individual, ensuring alignment with their career goals and the organization's needs.
- One-on-One Meetings:** Schedule and conduct individual one-on-one meetings with each direct report, addressing their concerns, goals, and any questions they might have.
- Recurring Reports:** Discuss the purpose, frequency, and audience of all recurring reports that the department is responsible for.
- Team Dynamics:** Gain an understanding of the overall dynamics within the team, relationships among team members, and any potential challenges.
- Performance Improvement Plans:** If applicable, review any performance improvement plans in place for team members who may need additional support or guidance.
- Recognition and Rewards:** Review any recognition or rewards programs in place to ensure team members are acknowledged for their contributions.
- Team Meetings:** Understand the frequency and nature of team meetings, and if needed, propose improvements to enhance communication and collaboration.
- Team Skills and Expertise:** Assess the skills and expertise present within the team, identifying areas of strength and potential skill gaps.

- Resource Allocation:** Review how work is allocated within the team, ensuring an equitable distribution of tasks and responsibilities.
- Team Culture:** Gain insights into the team culture, values, and any ongoing initiatives to foster a positive and productive work environment.

1.2 Goals & Objectives

- Define Goals:** Clearly define overarching goals that align with the organization's vision and strategic priorities.
- SMART Objectives:** Develop Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) objectives that support the defined goals.
- Ownership Assignment:** Review ownership of each objective to the appropriate individuals or teams responsible for its achievement.
- Alignment:** Ensure that individual and team objectives are aligned with departmental and organizational goals.
- Performance Indicators:** Review key performance indicators (KPIs) or metrics to measure progress and success towards each objective.
- Adjustment and Adaptation:** Review objectives and make necessary adjustments based on changing circumstances or priorities.
- Evaluation and Assessment:** Review evaluation and assessment protocols that measure the overall effectiveness and impact of goal achievement.
- Alignment with Development Plans:** Ensure that goals and objectives align with individual development plans, fostering personal and professional growth.
- Documentation and Reporting:** Review documentation of goals, objectives, progress updates, and outcomes for future reference and reporting.
- Continuous Improvement:** Review and refine the goal-setting process, incorporating lessons learned and best practices to enhance goal and objective management.

1.3 Stakeholders

- Stakeholder Map:** Review the department's stakeholder map, outlining all key internal and external stakeholders.
- Stakeholder Relationships:** Discuss the nature and status of relationships with these stakeholders, including any challenges or opportunities.
- Key Contacts:** Identify key contacts within each stakeholder group.
- Stakeholder Communication:** Discuss how and when communication with each stakeholder typically occurs.
- Stakeholder Expectations:** Discuss the expectations and needs of each stakeholder from the department.
- Recent Interactions:** Review any recent significant interactions with stakeholders, including the outcomes and any follow-up actions.
- Upcoming Interactions:** Discuss any planned or scheduled interactions with stakeholders in the near future.
- Stakeholder Feedback:** Share any recent feedback or concerns raised by stakeholders.
- Stakeholder Initiatives:** Discuss any ongoing or upcoming initiatives that involve these stakeholders.
- Stakeholder Meetings:** Discuss the department's role in any regular stakeholder meetings or forums.
- Reports:** Review any reports or updates that the department provides to these stakeholders.
- Introductions:** Arrange for the incoming manager to be introduced to key stakeholders.
- Contracts:** Discuss any contracts or agreements that exist with stakeholders, providing copies where appropriate.
- Conflict Resolution:** Discuss any past or potential conflicts with stakeholders and how they have been or would be resolved.

1.4 Human Resources

- HR Team:** Discuss the roles, responsibilities, and strengths of each member of the HR team.
- HR Policies:** Review all existing HR policies, discussing key elements and the rationale behind them.
- Documents:** Provide copies of important HR documents such as employee handbooks, HR procedures, benefits packages, contracts, etc.
- Systems:** Review the HR systems used for employee data management, timekeeping, payroll, benefits administration, etc., and arrange for new logins as required.
- Benefits Program:** Discuss the benefits program, including the providers used, enrollment periods, and feedback from employees.
- Metrics:** Discuss key HR metrics like turnover rate, time to fill vacancies, employee engagement score, etc.
- Discuss Team Structure:** Review the current organization chart and discuss the roles and responsibilities of each team member.
- Performance Reviews:** Provide and discuss the most recent performance reviews for each team member.
- Onboarding Process:** Walk through the onboarding process for new hires, highlighting critical steps and resources.
- Offboarding Process:** Discuss the offboarding process, ensuring to cover all necessary steps for employee separations.
- Performance Evaluation Process:** Review the performance evaluation process, discussing criteria, timelines, and feedback mechanisms.
- Talent Identification:** Discuss any high-performing individuals or those with high potential who might be ready for growth opportunities.
- Employee Engagement Initiatives:** Discuss any employee engagement initiatives, such as team-building activities, employee recognition programs, etc.
- Introduce Key Contacts:** Introduce the incoming manager to key contacts, both within and outside the organization, that are crucial for the HR function.
- Employee Relations:** Discuss any ongoing employee relations issues, such as conflicts, grievances, or disciplinary proceedings.

- Upcoming Evaluations:** Share the schedule for upcoming performance evaluations and discuss the process.
- Compliance:** Review any legal compliance issues, including labor laws, employment contracts, equal opportunity employment, etc.
- HR Challenges:** Discuss any challenges or issues faced by the HR team, such as hiring difficulties, employee relations issues, or system inefficiencies.
- Future HR Needs:** Discuss any anticipated future HR needs, based on factors like business growth, strategic initiatives, or changes in labor law.

1.5 Training & Development

- Training Requirements:** Discuss the key skills and competencies required by the team, and the training needed to develop these.
- Current Training Programs:** Review any ongoing training programs or courses that the team is participating in.
- Training Resources:** Provide any resources or materials used for training, such as manuals, online courses, or external providers.
- Upcoming Training:** Discuss any planned training activities, including the objectives and schedule.
- Budget:** Review the budget allocated for training and development activities.
- Records:** Provide records of the training that team members have completed, including any certifications.
- Development Plans:** Discuss any individual development plans in place for team members.
- Mentoring and Coaching:** Discuss any mentoring or coaching arrangements within the team.
- Training Evaluation:** Discuss how the effectiveness of training is assessed.
- Professional Development:** Discuss opportunities for professional development, such as conferences, industry events, or further study.
- Training Roles:** Identify the team members who are responsible for coordinating or delivering training.
- Training Needs:** Discuss any identified training needs or skills gaps within the team.
- Policies:** Review any policies related to training and development.

1.6 Talent Acquisition

- Talent Acquisition Strategy:** Discuss the department's current talent acquisition strategy, including objectives, target talent markets, and recruitment channels.
- Open Positions:** Review any open positions, including job descriptions, candidate requirements, and hiring timelines.
- Recruitment Process:** Discuss the recruitment process, including steps like job posting, resume screening, interviews, assessments, and offer negotiation.
- Recruitment Tools:** Review the tools used for talent acquisition, such as applicant tracking systems (ATS), recruitment marketing software, or interview scheduling tools.
- Partners:** Discuss any external recruitment agencies or platforms used and introduce the incoming manager to key contacts.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to talent acquisition, such as equal opportunity laws or data privacy regulations.
- Performance:** Discuss key recruitment metrics, such as time-to-hire, cost-per-hire, offer acceptance rate, and early turnover rate.
- Talent Pipeline:** Review the current talent pipeline, including active candidates, passive candidates, and any talent communities or talent pools.
- Employer Brand:** Discuss the department's employer brand, including its value proposition, key messages, and any employer branding activities.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the key internal stakeholders for talent acquisition, such as hiring managers, interview panelists, or senior management.
- Challenges:** Discuss any challenges or issues in talent acquisition, such as talent shortages, competitive pressures, or process inefficiencies.

1.7 Meetings & Events

- Regular Meetings:** Discuss any regularly scheduled meetings that the department holds, such as team meetings, project status updates, or strategy sessions.
- Meeting Agendas:** Provide copies of recent meeting agendas and minutes.
- Meeting Roles:** Discuss the roles and responsibilities of team members in these meetings, such as who usually facilitates or takes minutes.
- Event Calendar:** Review the department's calendar of upcoming events, such as conferences, training sessions, or social events.
- Event Planning:** Discuss any events that the department is currently planning, including the objectives, schedule, and responsibilities.
- Event Documentation:** Provide any key documents related to these events, such as event plans, budgets, or vendor contracts.
- Event Roles:** Discuss the roles and responsibilities of team members in planning and executing these events.
- Event Feedback:** Discuss feedback from recent events and any lessons learned for future events.
- Meeting and Event Spaces:** Review and/or inspect the locations typically used for meetings and events, and discuss any booking procedures or guidelines.
- Meeting Technology:** Review the technology used for meetings, such as video conferencing systems or collaboration tools, and arrange access for the incoming manager.
- Key Attendees:** Introduce the incoming manager to key attendees of these meetings or events, either in person or by providing contact details.
- Meeting and Event Budget:** Discuss the budget for meetings and events and any related financial considerations.

1.8 Culture & Engagement

- Culture Assessment:** Evaluate the current organizational culture, including its values, beliefs, and behaviors, through surveys, interviews, or assessments.
- Employee Engagement Surveys:** Review and analyze the results of recent employee engagement surveys to identify areas of strength and improvement.
- Communication Channels:** Evaluate the existing communication channels within the organization, including team meetings, town halls, and digital platforms, to ensure effective information flow and employee engagement.
- Diversity and Inclusion:** Evaluate the organization's efforts in fostering diversity and inclusion, including policies, representation, and inclusion programs, to ensure a supportive and inclusive work environment.
- Work-Life Balance:** Assess the organization's policies and practices around work-life balance, including flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, mental health support, stress management, and employee assistance programs.
- Team Building Activities:** Review the effectiveness of team building activities and initiatives, such as retreats, social events, or team bonding exercises.
- Employee Feedback:** Assess the existing mechanisms for collecting employee feedback, such as suggestion boxes, surveys, or feedback sessions, and identify opportunities to improve feedback processes and responsiveness.
- Leadership Alignment:** Evaluate the alignment of leadership behaviors and actions with the desired organizational culture and employee engagement, providing guidance and support to leaders where needed.
- Change Management:** Assess the organization's change management practices, including communication, employee involvement, and training, to ensure a smooth transition during periods of change.
- Leadership Development:** Identify opportunities for leadership development programs to cultivate strong and inclusive leaders who can effectively drive culture and engagement initiatives.

1.9 Reports

- Recurring Reports:** Discuss the purpose, frequency, and audience of all recurring reports that the department is responsible for.
- Report Generation Process:** Discuss the process for generating these reports, including the data sources, analysis, and software used.
- Report Ownership:** Identify who within the team is responsible for each report, and any specialized skills or knowledge needed to produce them.
- Past Reports:** Provide the incoming manager with copies of the recurring reports from the past 2-3 years.
- One-off Reports:** Discuss any significant one-off reports produced in the last 2-3 years, providing context and sharing copies.
- Upcoming Reports:** Discuss any upcoming reporting deadlines or major reports that are currently being prepared.
- Report Review Process:** Explain the process for reviewing and validating the information included in the reports before they are distributed.
- Data Quality Control:** Discuss the controls in place to ensure the quality and accuracy of the data used in reports.
- Key Report Metrics:** Discuss the key metrics included in the reports and how they are calculated.
- Report Feedback:** Share any feedback or requests related to the reports received from their audience, highlighting areas for potential improvement.
- Report Access:** Ensure the incoming manager has access to all necessary systems, databases, or files to generate and review the reports.

2: Finance & Legal

2.1 Financial

- Budget:** Review the current department budget, including its allocation across various categories or projects.
- Historical Spend:** Discuss the historical spending trends of the department over the last few years.
- Financial Targets:** Discuss the financial targets for the current fiscal year, including any specific revenue or cost-saving goals.
- Upcoming Major Expenses:** Highlight any major expenses or investments planned for the near future.
- Financial Performance:** Review the department's financial performance to date against its targets.
- Invoice and Billing Process:** Discuss the process for handling invoices, billing, and payments related to the department.
- Financial Reports:** Provide and review key financial reports, including the most recent ones and those of significance in the last 2-3 years.
- Cost Centers:** Discuss the different cost centers under the department's control and their budget allocation.
- Financial Risks:** Discuss potential financial risks or issues that may impact the department's budget or financial targets.
- Financial Compliance:** Discuss any financial compliance requirements, including auditing processes and reports.
- Budget Planning:** Share information about the budget planning cycle, including key dates and involved stakeholders.
- Vendor Contracts:** Review the financial aspects of major vendor contracts, including payment terms and contract renewal dates.
- Asset Depreciation:** Discuss the depreciation schedule for any significant assets owned by the department.

2.2 Assets

- Asset Inventory:** Review the inventory list of all assets that are assigned to or owned by the department.
- Physical Inspection:** Conduct a physical inspection of the department's assets where applicable.

- Asset Value and Depreciation:** Discuss the value of these assets and their depreciation schedules.
- Asset Management:** Discuss the current processes for managing and maintaining these assets.
- Asset Responsibilities:** Identify who within the team is responsible for each asset, and any special training or skills needed to operate or maintain them.
- Asset Performance:** Discuss the performance or condition of these assets, noting any issues or upcoming maintenance needs.
- Asset Documentation:** Provide copies of any relevant documents, such as purchase orders, warranties, or user manuals.
- Technology Assets:** Discuss any technology or software assets, ensuring the incoming manager has the necessary access and understands their usage.
- Upcoming Asset Purchases:** Highlight any plans or budget for purchasing new assets in the near future.
- Asset Disposal:** Discuss any assets that are nearing the end of their useful life and the plans for their disposal or replacement.
- Asset Risks:** Discuss any potential risks related to these assets, such as security, compliance, or health and safety concerns.
- Insurance:** Review the insurance coverage for these assets, if applicable.

2.3 Corporate Policies & Procedures

- Policy Inventory:** Review an inventory of all corporate policies and procedures that apply to the department.
- Policy Details:** Discuss the key points of each policy, including their purpose and requirements.
- Compliance:** Discuss the department's compliance with these policies, including any issues or exceptions.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of all relevant policies and procedures for the incoming manager's records.
- Training:** Discuss any training that the team receives on these policies, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Updates:** Discuss how updates to corporate policies are communicated and implemented within the department.
- Owners:** Identify the team members who are responsible for managing or enforcing each policy.
- Policy Reviews:** Discuss any recent or upcoming reviews of these policies.
- Policy Exceptions:** Discuss any exceptions or waivers that have been granted to these policies, and the reasons for these.
- Policy Breaches:** Discuss any breaches of these policies that have occurred and how they were resolved.
- Feedback:** Discuss any feedback or concerns that have been raised about these policies.
- Risks:** Discuss potential risks or challenges associated with these policies.
- Development:** Discuss any policies that are currently being developed or revised.
- Audits:** Discuss any recent or upcoming audits related to these policies.

2.4 Legal

- Legal Obligations:** Discuss the department's key legal obligations, such as regulatory requirements or contractual obligations.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of key legal documents, such as contracts, licenses, or permits.
- Legal Incidents:** Discuss any recent legal incidents or disputes involving the department, and how they were resolved.
- Legal Support:** Introduce the incoming manager to key legal contacts, either internal or external, who provide legal advice or support to the department.
- Legal and Compliance Issues:** Discuss any recent compliance issues and how they were resolved.
- Legal and Compliance Risks:** Discuss potential legal or compliance risks that the department may face.
- Legal Changes:** Discuss any recent or upcoming changes to laws or regulations that will affect the department.
- Legal Expenses:** Review the department's legal expenses, such as fees for external legal advice.
- Legal and Compliance Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for managing its legal and compliance obligations.

2.5 Risk & Compliance

- Regulatory Requirements:** Discuss the key regulatory requirements that apply to the department's operations.
- Compliance Policies and Procedures:** Review the policies and procedures in place to ensure compliance with these requirements.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of any documented policies, procedures, or records related to compliance.
- Roles and Responsibilities:** Identify who within the team is responsible for maintaining compliance in various areas.
- Training:** Discuss any training that the team receives on compliance issues, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Regulatory Updates:** Discuss how the department stays updated on changes to regulatory requirements.
- Reporting:** Review any reports or updates that the department provides to regulatory bodies.
- Past Compliance Issues:** Discuss any past non-compliance issues or breaches, and how they were resolved.
- Upcoming Compliance Deadlines:** Highlight any upcoming deadlines or events related to compliance.
- Regulatory Audits:** Discuss any recent or upcoming audits from regulatory bodies.
- Regulatory Relationships:** Discuss relationships with regulatory bodies, including key contacts.
- Compliance Risks:** Discuss potential risks or challenges related to compliance.
- Compliance Technology:** Discuss any technology or systems used to support compliance activities.
- Compliance Improvement Plans:** Discuss any plans or initiatives to improve compliance management in the department.

2.6 Real Estate Management

- Real Estate Portfolio:** Review a list of the real estate properties managed or used by the department.
- Property Details:** Discuss the details of each property, including its location, size, layout, and current usage.
- Property Documentation:** Provide copies of key property documents, such as deeds, leases, or floor plans.
- Property Expenses:** Discuss the expenses associated with each property, such as rent, utilities, or maintenance costs.
- Contacts:** Introduce the incoming manager to key property contacts, such as landlords, property managers, or maintenance providers.
- Property Inspections:** Arrange for inspections of the properties, if necessary.
- Property Issues:** Discuss any issues or concerns with the properties, such as maintenance needs or space constraints.
- Policies:** Review the department's policies and procedures related to real estate management.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to the properties, such as building codes or lease conditions.
- Risks:** Discuss potential real estate risks or challenges that the department may face.
- Real Estate Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for managing its real estate needs, such as expansion plans or relocation considerations.
- Real Estate Projects:** Discuss any recent or upcoming projects related to real estate, such as renovations or space optimization initiatives.
- Building Security:** Discuss the measures in place to ensure building security, such as access controls, alarm systems, or security personnel.

3: Product

3.1 Research & Development

- R&D Strategy:** Discuss the existing R&D strategy, including key areas of focus, alignment with business strategy, and long-term goals.
- R&D Projects:** Provide an overview of current and upcoming R&D projects, including their objectives, timelines, and key personnel involved.
- Budget:** Review the current R&D budget, including spending to date, future commitments, and major cost components.
- R&D Team:** Discuss the R&D team members, their roles, capabilities, and development needs. Introduce the incoming manager to the team.
- Processes:** Review key R&D processes, such as idea generation, project approval, project management, testing, and validation.
- Facilities and Equipment:** Inspect R&D facilities and equipment. Discuss any equipment needs, maintenance schedules, or safety issues.
- Intellectual Property:** Discuss the management of intellectual property (IP), including patent applications, granted patents, IP strategy, and any IP-related issues.
- R&D Collaboration:** Review any collaborations with external partners, such as universities, research institutes, or other companies. Introduce key partners to the incoming manager.
- Compliance:** Discuss compliance issues related to R&D, such as safety regulations, ethics requirements for human subjects research, or data protection rules.
- Performance Metrics:** Discuss key R&D performance metrics, such as time-to-market, research productivity, or patent quality.
- Risks:** Discuss potential risks related to R&D, such as project failures, budget overruns, safety incidents, or IP infringements.
- Documentation:** Provide any key R&D documents, such as project reports, research protocols, or lab notebooks.
- Training:** Discuss any training needs or programs for the R&D team, and whether the incoming manager will need specific training.
- Future R&D Needs:** Discuss any anticipated future needs or trends in R&D, such as new technologies, research fields, or skills.
- R&D Culture:** Discuss the culture within the R&D team, including how creativity and innovation are fostered, how failures are handled, and any cultural aspects the incoming manager should be aware of.

3.2 Product Management

- Product Portfolio:** Review the department's current product portfolio, including key features and pricing for each product.
- Product Performance:** Discuss the performance of each product in terms of sales, customer feedback, market share, and profitability.
- Product Development:** Discuss any products currently in development, including their objectives, status, expected launch dates, and key milestones.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of key product documents, such as product specifications, user manuals, or marketing materials.
- Product Strategy:** Discuss the department's product strategy, including target markets, competitive positioning, and product lifecycle management.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to the products, such as safety regulations or industry standards.
- Risks:** Discuss potential product risks or challenges that may be faced, such as competitive threats, technological changes, or supply chain disruptions.
- Product Teams:** Introduce the incoming manager to the product management team and other teams involved in product development, such as engineering.
- Product Tools:** Review the tools used for product management, such as project management software, design tools, or customer feedback systems.
- Meetings:** Discuss any regular meetings related to product management, such as product reviews or development status updates.
- Product Budget:** Discuss the budget for product management activities, including product development and product marketing.
- Suppliers:** Discuss any suppliers or partners involved in product development or manufacturing.
- Training:** Discuss any product training that the team receives, such as technical training or market research techniques.
- Product Innovation:** Discuss the department's approach to product innovation and any recent successes or lessons learned.

4: Operations & Supply Chain

4.1 Project Management

- Current Projects:** Review a list of all ongoing projects of the department.
- Project Status:** Discuss the current status of each project, including progress, challenges, and next steps.
- Project Details:** Discuss the details of each project, including the objectives, scope, schedule, budget, and team.
- Teams:** Identify the team members involved in each project and their roles.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of project plans, reports, and other documents.
- Upcoming Projects:** Discuss any projects that are planned or in the initiation stage.
- Past Projects:** Review significant projects completed in the last 2-3 years, discussing outcomes and lessons learned.
- Project Performance:** Discuss how project performance is measured and reported.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the stakeholders for each project, their expectations, and communication plan.
- Risks:** Discuss any risks or issues associated with these projects.
- Project Management Tools:** Discuss any project management tools or methodologies used by the department.
- Meetings:** Discuss regular project meetings, including their purpose, attendees, and schedule.
- Budgets:** Review the budgets for each project and current expenditure.
- Deadlines:** Highlight any key upcoming project deadlines or milestones.
- Project Deliverables:** Review the deliverables for each project, discussing their quality and acceptance criteria.
- Evaluation:** Discuss how the success of projects is evaluated.

4.2 Processes

- Standard Operating Procedures:** Review all standard operating procedures (SOPs) that the department follows.
- Process Documentation:** Provide copies of all documented processes and procedures, noting any that are out-of-date or under review.
- Critical Processes:** Discuss the most critical processes, highlighting any potential risks or points of failure.
- Process Ownership:** Identify the team members who own or lead each process, noting any specialized skills or knowledge required.
- Process Performance:** Discuss how the performance of these processes is measured and any recent trends or issues.
- Process Improvement:** Discuss any ongoing or planned process improvement initiatives.
- Upcoming Process Changes:** Highlight any upcoming changes to processes or procedures that the incoming manager should be aware of.
- Process Training:** Review any process-specific training that the team receives and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Compliance Processes:** Discuss any processes that are particularly important for compliance with regulations or standards.
- Technology Used in Processes:** Discuss any technology or systems used in these processes and ensure the incoming manager has appropriate access and training.
- Vendor Involvement in Processes:** Review any processes that involve vendors or external service providers, and the nature of their involvement.
- Process Contingency Plans:** Discuss contingency plans for critical processes in the event of disruptions or emergencies.
- Process Audits:** Discuss any recent or upcoming audits related to these processes.

4.3 Vendor Management

- Vendor List:** Review the department's list of key vendors.
- Vendor Profiles:** Discuss the profile of each key vendor, including their products or services, terms, and history with the department.
- Contacts:** Introduce the incoming manager to key vendor contacts, either in person or by providing contact details.
- Contracts:** Provide copies of contracts or agreements with key vendors.
- Vendor Performance:** Discuss the performance of key vendors, including any issues or feedback.
- Meetings:** Discuss any regular meetings with vendors, including their purpose, attendees, and schedule.
- Communications:** Review examples of recent communications with vendors, such as purchase orders or contract negotiations.
- Risks:** Discuss potential risks or challenges related to vendors, such as supply chain disruptions or price increases.
- Opportunities:** Discuss potential opportunities for improving vendor relationships or terms.
- Metrics:** Review key vendor metrics, such as on-time delivery rates or quality metrics.
- Vendor Management System:** Discuss the vendor management system used by the department and arrange access for the incoming manager.
- Vendor Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for managing vendor relationships.
- Payment Terms:** Discuss the payment terms with each vendor and any related financial considerations.
- Vendor Audits:** Discuss any recent or upcoming audits related to vendors.

4.4 Inventory Management

- Inventory Overview:** Discuss the types and quantities of inventory currently held, including raw materials, work-in-process, and finished goods.
- Inventory System:** Review the system used for inventory management, such as an inventory management software or enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.
- Inventory Locations:** Inspect the locations where inventory is stored, including warehouses, distribution centers, or retail outlets.
- Processes:** Discuss the processes for managing inventory, such as ordering, receiving, storing, picking, and shipping.
- Documents:** Provide copies of key inventory documents, such as purchase orders, delivery notes, or inventory reports.
- Metrics:** Discuss key inventory metrics, such as turnover rate, order accuracy, stockout rate, or carrying cost.
- Suppliers:** Discuss the key suppliers for inventory, including their products, terms, and performance, and introduce the incoming manager to key supplier contacts.
- Customers:** Discuss the key internal customers for inventory, such as sales teams, production teams, or customer service teams.
- Risks:** Discuss any risks associated with inventory, such as obsolescence, shrinkage, or supply disruptions.
- Training:** Discuss any inventory management training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to inventory, such as safety regulations, customs regulations, or accounting standards.
- Costs:** Discuss the costs associated with inventory, such as purchase costs, carrying costs, or loss costs.
- Inventory Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for inventory management, such as just-in-time, consignment, or safety stock strategies.

4.5 Distribution & Logistics

- Distribution Strategy:** Discuss the current strategy for distribution, including distribution channels, logistics partners, and target service levels.
- Logistics Systems:** Review the systems used for logistics management, such as transportation management systems (TMS) or warehouse management systems (WMS).
- Distribution Centers:** Inspect the distribution centers or warehouses used, including their locations, capacities, and key processes.
- Documents:** Provide copies of key logistics documents, such as shipping manifests, delivery notes, or logistics contracts.
- Logistics Performance:** Discuss key logistics performance metrics, such as on-time delivery rate, order accuracy, or cost per shipment.
- Providers:** Discuss the key logistics providers used, including their services, performance, and contracts, and introduce the incoming manager to key provider contacts.
- Processes:** Discuss the processes for managing logistics, such as order picking, packing, shipping, and returns.
- Inventory Management:** Discuss how inventory management is coordinated with logistics, such as inventory replenishment, stock allocation, or demand forecasting.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to logistics, such as safety regulations, customs regulations, or transport regulations.
- Training:** Discuss any logistics training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Future Logistics Needs:** Discuss any anticipated future logistics needs, based on factors like business growth, market expansion, or strategic initiatives.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the key internal stakeholders for distribution and logistics, such as sales teams, customer service teams, or production teams.

4.6 Contracts

- Contract Inventory:** Review an inventory of all contracts that the department is responsible for.
- Details:** Discuss the key terms and conditions of each contract, including the scope of work, payment terms, and termination clauses.
- Performance:** Review the performance of each contract to date, highlighting any issues or concerns.
- Owners:** Identify the team members who manage or oversee each contract.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of all contracts for the incoming manager's records.
- Risks:** Discuss any potential risks or issues associated with these contracts.
- Upcoming Contract Renewals:** Highlight any contracts that are due for renewal in the near future and discuss the plans for these renewals.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to these contracts and how they are being managed.
- Supplier Performance:** Discuss the performance of suppliers or service providers under these contracts.
- Dispute Resolution:** Discuss any disputes that have arisen under these contracts and how they were resolved.
- Contract Audits:** Discuss any recent or upcoming audits related to these contracts.
- Contract Negotiations:** Discuss any ongoing or upcoming contract negotiations.
- Termination:** Discuss any plans or procedures for terminating contracts, if necessary.
- Contract Templates:** If standard contract templates are used, provide these for the incoming manager's reference.

4.7 Joint Ventures & Partnerships

- Partnership Overview:** Discuss the existing partnerships and joint ventures, their purpose, and their alignment with the organization's strategy.
- Documents:** Provide copies of partnership agreements, contracts, joint venture documents, or other relevant legal documents.
- Partnership Performance:** Discuss the performance of each partnership or joint venture, including any key metrics or targets.
- Operations:** Review the operational aspects of managing each partnership or joint venture, such as communication channels, meeting schedules, or decision-making processes.
- Roles & Responsibilities:** Discuss the roles and responsibilities of your organization and the partner organization in each partnership or joint venture.
- Partner Introductions:** Introduce the incoming manager to key contacts at each partner organization.
- Challenges:** Discuss any challenges or issues faced in managing each partnership or joint venture.
- Opportunities:** Discuss any potential opportunities for further collaboration or growth within each partnership or joint venture.
- Finances:** Discuss the financial aspects of each partnership or joint venture, such as revenue sharing, cost allocations, or investment commitments.
- Compliance:** Review any compliance requirements or obligations related to each partnership or joint venture.
- Risks:** Discuss any risks associated with each partnership or joint venture, such as partner solvency risks, operational risks, or geopolitical risks.
- Partnership Projects:** Discuss any ongoing or upcoming projects related to each partnership or joint venture.
- Future Partnership Needs:** Discuss any anticipated future needs for new partnerships or joint ventures, based on factors like business growth, market trends, or strategic initiatives.
- Partnership Termination Procedures:** Review the procedures for terminating a partnership or joint venture, in case this becomes necessary in the future.
- Partnership Lessons Learned:** Discuss any lessons learned from managing each partnership or joint venture, to help the incoming manager avoid potential pitfalls.

4.8 Safety & Health

- Safety Policies:** Review the department's safety policies and procedures.
- Safety Documentation:** Provide copies of safety manuals, emergency plans, and other key documents.
- Safety Training:** Discuss the safety training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Safety Equipment:** Inspect safety equipment, including first aid supplies and any personal protective equipment.
- Emergency Procedures:** Review emergency evacuation procedures and the location of exits and assembly points.
- Safety Incidents:** Discuss any recent safety incidents, including what happened and how it was resolved.
- Health and Wellness Programs:** Discuss any health and wellness programs that are in place for team members.
- Safety Meetings:** Discuss any regular safety meetings, including their purpose, attendees, and schedule.
- Safety Audits:** Discuss any recent or upcoming safety audits or inspections.
- Safety Risks:** Discuss potential safety risks or hazards within the workplace.
- Safety Performance:** Review safety metrics or indicators, such as accident rates.
- Ergonomics:** Review the department's approach to ergonomics and discuss any related issues.
- Safety Representatives:** Identify who within the team is responsible for safety, such as safety officers or first aiders.
- Safety Regulations:** Discuss key safety regulations that the department must comply with.

5: Marketing & Sales

5.1 Market Research

- Research Activities:** Review the department's current market research activities, including both ongoing research programs and recent one-off studies.
- Research Topics:** Discuss the key topics of interest for market research, such as customer preferences, market trends, or competitive intelligence.
- Research Methods:** Discuss the research methods used by the department, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, or data analysis.
- Research Tools:** Review the tools used for market research, such as research databases, survey software, or statistical analysis tools.
- Vendors:** Discuss any external vendors used for market research and introduce the incoming manager to key vendor contacts.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of recent research reports and any related documents, such as research briefs or questionnaires.
- Research Budget:** Discuss the budget for market research activities, including any contracted services or subscription fees.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to market research, such as data privacy laws or ethical guidelines.
- Training:** Discuss any market research training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Meetings:** Discuss any regular meetings related to market research, such as research planning sessions or research debriefs.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the key internal stakeholders for market research findings, such as product teams, marketing teams, or senior management.
- Impact:** Discuss how the research findings are used in the department's decision-making or strategy.
- Research Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for leveraging market research to gain competitive advantage.

5.2 Marketing

- Marketing Plan:** Review the current marketing plan, including objectives, target markets, positioning, and key messages.
- Marketing Budget:** Discuss the marketing budget, including allocation across different marketing activities and any recent or expected changes.
- Marketing Channels:** Discuss the marketing channels used, such as digital marketing, direct mail, events, or public relations.
- Marketing Content:** Review samples of marketing content, such as advertisements, brochures, or blog posts, and discuss the process for creating and approving this content.
- Tools:** Review the tools used for marketing management, such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems, email marketing software, or analytics tools.
- Vendors:** Discuss any external vendors used for marketing services and introduce the incoming manager to key vendor contacts.
- Marketing Performance:** Discuss the key performance indicators (KPIs) used to measure marketing effectiveness and review recent performance data.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to marketing, such as advertising standards or data privacy laws.
- Marketing Events:** Discuss any recent or upcoming marketing events, such as trade shows, webinars, or product launches.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the key internal stakeholders for marketing, such as sales teams, product teams, or senior management.
- Training:** Discuss any marketing training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Collaboration:** Discuss how the marketing team collaborates with other departments, such as sales or customer service.
- Marketing Strategy:** Review the department's strategy for optimizing marketing effectiveness and return on investment.

5.3 Pricing

- Pricing Strategy:** Discuss the department's current pricing strategy, including objectives, positioning, and any differentiation between products or markets.
- Price List:** Review the current price list for all products or services, including any volume discounts, promotional pricing, or dynamic pricing models.
- Pricing Methods:** Discuss the methods used to set prices, such as cost-plus pricing, value-based pricing, or competitive pricing.
- Tools:** Review the tools used for pricing management, such as pricing software or financial analysis tools.
- Data:** Provide copies of any data or analysis used in pricing decisions, such as cost breakdowns, market research, or price elasticity studies.
- Pricing Changes:** Discuss any recent or upcoming changes to prices, including the reasons for these changes and the expected impact.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to pricing, such as antitrust regulations or industry standards.
- Pricing Performance:** Discuss the performance of the department's pricing strategy in terms of revenue, profitability, market share, or customer feedback.
- Meetings:** Discuss any regular meetings related to pricing, such as pricing reviews or pricing strategy sessions.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the key internal stakeholders for pricing decisions, such as sales teams, product teams, or senior management.
- Risks:** Discuss potential pricing risks or challenges, such as competitive threats, cost changes, or customer resistance.
- Training:** Discuss any pricing training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Pricing Negotiations:** Discuss any major pricing negotiations with customers or suppliers, including the strategies used and the outcomes achieved.
- Pricing Reviews:** Discuss how often the pricing strategy is reviewed and what criteria are used to evaluate its effectiveness.

5.4 Sales

- Sales Strategy:** Discuss the department's current sales strategy, including targets, key markets, and sales tactics.
- Sales Targets:** Review the current and upcoming sales targets, both overall and broken down by product, region, or salesperson.
- Sales Performance:** Discuss recent sales performance in terms of revenue, profitability, and achievement against targets.
- Sales Pipeline:** Review the current sales pipeline, including key prospects, stages of the sales process, and expected revenues.
- Tools:** Review the tools used for sales management, such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems or sales analytics software.
- Documents:** Provide copies of key sales documents, such as sales presentations, proposals, or contracts.
- Training:** Discuss any sales training that the team receives, such as product training, sales skills training, or CRM training.
- Meetings:** Discuss any regular meetings related to sales, such as sales team meetings, pipeline reviews, or strategy sessions.
- Sales Incentives:** Discuss the sales incentive plan, including commission rates, bonus structures, and performance thresholds.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the key internal stakeholders for sales, such as product teams, marketing teams, or finance teams.
- Challenges:** Discuss any challenges or issues faced by the sales team, such as market competition, customer objections, or resource constraints.
- Key Accounts:** Review the department's key accounts, including relationship status, purchase history, and future opportunities.

5.5 Customers

- Customer List:** Review the department's list of key customers.
- Customer Profiles:** Discuss the profile of each key customer, including their needs, preferences, and history with the department.
- Contacts:** Introduce the incoming manager to key customer contacts, either in person or by providing contact details.
- Contracts:** Provide copies of contracts or agreements with key customers.
- Customer Service Standards:** Discuss the department's customer service standards and any related policies or procedures.
- Customer Feedback:** Discuss recent customer feedback or satisfaction survey results.
- Customer Complaints:** Discuss any recent customer complaints and how they were resolved.
- Meetings:** Discuss any regular meetings with customers, including their purpose, attendees, and schedule.
- Communications:** Review examples of recent communications with customers, such as newsletters or updates.
- Risks:** Discuss potential risks or challenges related to customers, such as changes in their business or industry.
- Opportunities:** Discuss potential opportunities for further growth or development with these customers.
- Customer Metrics:** Review key customer metrics, such as churn rate or customer lifetime value.
- Customer Relationship Management System:** Discuss the customer relationship management (CRM) system used by the department and arrange access for the incoming manager.
- Customer Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for managing and growing customer relationships.

5.6 Sales Operations

- Sales Operations Structure:** Discuss the current structure of the sales operations team, including the different roles and responsibilities.
- Sales Reporting:** Discuss the standard reports generated by the sales operations team, provide copies of recent reports, and explain how to generate and interpret these reports.
- Technology:** Review the sales technology stack, including customer relationship management (CRM) systems, sales enablement tools, and data analysis software.
- Processes:** Review the key sales processes managed by the sales operations team, such as lead management, deal approval, forecasting, and sales compensation.
- Metrics:** Discuss the key sales metrics tracked by the sales operations team, such as sales productivity, win rates, deal sizes, and sales cycle lengths.
- Sales Operations Team:** Introduce the incoming manager to the sales operations team members and provide an overview of their strengths, weaknesses, and development needs.
- Training:** Review the training programs managed by the sales operations team, such as new hire onboarding, product training, or sales methodology training.
- Territories and Quotas:** Review the process for setting sales territories and quotas and provide copies of current territory and quota assignments.
- Data Management:** Discuss how sales data is managed, including data entry standards, data cleaning procedures, and data privacy regulations.
- Resources:** Review any sales tools and resources provided by the sales operations team, such as pitch decks, case studies, or competitor intelligence.
- Compensation:** Review the sales compensation plan, including the process for calculating and paying commissions and any ongoing issues or upcoming changes.
- Sales Operations Projects:** Discuss any ongoing or upcoming projects managed by the sales operations team, such as system upgrades, process improvements, or new tool rollouts.
- Sales Operations Challenges:** Discuss any challenges faced by the sales operations team, such as system limitations, data quality issues, or stakeholder resistance.
- Sales Operations Improvements:** Discuss any opportunities for improving sales operations, based on past experiences, team feedback, or industry best practices.

6: Technology & Data

6.1 Information Technology

- Infrastructure Overview:** Discuss the existing IT infrastructure, including the hardware, software, and network resources.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of network diagrams, system architecture designs, and other related documents.
- IT Assets:** Conduct a physical inspection of critical IT assets, such as servers, data centers, network devices, and review the full inventory of all IT assets.
- Infrastructure Management Tools:** Review the tools used for managing the IT infrastructure.
- Vendors:** Discuss key IT vendors, including their services, performance, and contracts, and introduce the incoming manager to key vendor contacts.
- Processes:** Discuss the processes for managing the IT infrastructure, such as incident management, change management, and disaster recovery processes.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to IT, such as data protection regulations, industry standards, or audit requirements.
- Performance Metrics:** Discuss key IT performance metrics, such as uptime, availability, system performance, or incident resolution time.
- Security:** Discuss IT security measures in place, including firewalls, intrusion detection systems, encryption, and any other relevant security controls.
- IT Projects:** Discuss any ongoing or upcoming IT projects, such as system upgrades, hardware replacements, or infrastructure expansion projects.
- Budget:** Discuss the budget for IT infrastructure, including recurring costs, capital expenditure, and projected future costs.
- Training:** Discuss any IT training that the team receives, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Future IT Infrastructure Needs:** Discuss any anticipated future IT infrastructure needs based on factors like business growth, technology trends, or strategy.

6.2 Data Management

- Data Inventory:** Review an inventory of all major data sets managed or used by the department.
- Data Sources:** Discuss the sources of this data, and how it is collected or updated.
- Data Usage:** Discuss how the data is used in the department's operations, decision-making, or reporting.
- Data Quality:** Discuss any issues or concerns with data quality, such as accuracy, completeness, or timeliness.
- Documentation:** Provide copies of data dictionaries, schema diagrams, or other documents that describe the data.
- Data Access:** Arrange for the incoming manager to receive access to these data sets, if necessary.
- Security:** Discuss the measures in place to ensure data security, such as access controls, encryption, or backup procedures.
- Policies:** Review the department's data management policies and procedures.
- Compliance:** Discuss any compliance requirements related to data, such as data privacy laws or industry standards.
- Data Projects:** Discuss any recent or upcoming projects related to data, such as data cleaning initiatives or system migrations.
- Data Tools:** Review the tools used for data management, such as databases, data analysis software, or data visualization tools.
- Training:** Discuss any training that the team receives on data management or data analysis.
- Data Risks:** Discuss potential risks or challenges related to data.
- Data Strategy:** Discuss the department's strategy for managing and leveraging its data.

6.3 Reports

- IT Report Overview:** Discuss the existing IT reports, their purpose, frequency, and key audiences.
- Report Copies:** Provide copies of recent IT reports, including operational reports, project status reports, and IT budget reports.
- Reporting Process:** Review the process for generating, reviewing, and distributing each IT report, including any automation or data validation steps.
- Report Templates:** Provide copies of the templates used for each IT report, and explain how to use these templates.
- Reporting Tools:** Review the tools used for generating IT reports, such as reporting software, databases, or spreadsheet tools.
- Data Sources:** Review the data sources used for each IT report, including any data quality or access controls issues.
- Metrics:** Discuss the key metrics included in each IT report, and how these metrics are calculated and interpreted.
- Stakeholders:** Discuss the main audiences for each IT report, their information needs, and any feedback they have provided on the reports.
- Updates:** Discuss the process for updating the IT reports, such as adding new metrics, changing data sources, or redesigning report formats.
- IT Report Team:** Introduce the incoming manager to any team members involved in producing the IT reports and discuss their roles and capabilities.
- Compliance:** Review any compliance requirements related to the IT reports, such as data privacy rules, audit requirements, or industry regulations.
- Training:** Discuss any training needs related to IT reporting, both for the incoming manager and for other staff involved in reporting.
- Risks:** Discuss any risks related to IT reporting, such as data errors, reporting delays, or stakeholder dissatisfaction.
- Improvements:** Discuss any opportunities for improving the IT reports, based on past experiences, stakeholder feedback, or industry best practices.

6.4 Technology

- Technology Systems:** Discuss the various technology systems used by the department, including their purpose and function.
- System Access:** Arrange for the incoming manager to receive access to these systems, if necessary.
- System Owners:** Identify the team members who are responsible for each system, and any specialized skills or knowledge they require.
- Documentation:** Provide any available documentation or manuals for these systems.
- Performance:** Discuss the performance and reliability of these systems, noting any recent issues or downtime.
- Training:** Discuss any training that the team receives on these systems, and whether the incoming manager will need this training.
- Upcoming System Changes:** Highlight any planned upgrades or changes to these systems.
- Support:** Discuss the support available for these systems, both internally and from vendors.
- Data Security:** Discuss the data security measures in place for these systems, including any compliance requirements.
- Technology Vendors:** Discuss any technology vendors or service providers, including their contracts and performance.
- System Costs:** Discuss the costs associated with these systems, including licensing, maintenance, and support costs.
- Technology Strategy:** Discuss how these systems fit into the department's overall technology strategy.
- Disaster Recovery:** Discuss the disaster recovery plans in place for these systems.

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