"The First 90 Days: Proven Strategies for Getting Up to Speed Faster and Smarter" is a book written by Michael D. Watkins. It is widely recognized as a valuable resource for leaders in transition, particularly those taking on new roles. The book provides a comprehensive approach to transition leadership, offering a variety of tools, strategies, and frameworks that leaders can use to navigate the challenges they face in the initial period of their new positions.

# General Summary:

Chapter 1: Prepare Yourself

Summary:

- Emphasizes a psychological and mental shift to adapt to a new role.

- Leaders must “promote” themselves mentally to successfully navigate the new challenges.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- STARS Model: Understand whether the organization is in a Start-up, Turnaround, Accelerated Growth, Realignment, or Sustaining Success situation to adapt your strategy appropriately.

Chapter 2: Accelerate Your Learning

Summary:

- Highlights the need to quickly understand the organization’s structure, culture, and market.

- Focus on learning and understanding the critical aspects of your role and the business.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Learning Plan: A structured plan to understand the business, culture, team, and other relevant aspects systematically.

Chapter 3: Match Strategy to Situation

Summary:

- Identifying the current state of the organization to align your strategy effectively.

- Understand the challenges and choose a strategy that fits the organizational context.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- STARS Model (expanded): Define your strategy based on whether the organization is in Start-up, Turnaround, Accelerated Growth, Realignment, or Sustaining Success.

Chapter 4: Secure Early Wins

Summary:

- Focus on gaining momentum through early successes.

- Choose achievable targets and prioritize them to build credibility.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Early Win: Selecting and focusing on initiatives that can provide visible and impactful results quickly.

Chapter 5: Negotiate Success

Summary:

- Developing a positive and constructive relationship with your boss.

- Managing expectations and ensuring clarity in communication.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Expectation Conversation: Open dialogue with your supervisor to clarify expectations, resources, and timelines.

Chapter 6: Achieve Alignment

Summary:

- Ensuring that the company’s strategy, structure, and systems are cohesively aligned.

- Address misalignments to ensure smooth operational flow.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Business Strategy Alignment: Ensuring coherence among strategy, structure, systems, and skills.

Chapter 7: Build Your Team

Summary:

- Assess and understand your team’s capabilities and dynamics.

- Make necessary changes and ensure the team is aligned with the new direction.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Team Redesign: Reassessing and restructuring the team to align with strategic goals.

Chapter 8: Create Alliances

Summary:

- Building relationships and networks both within and outside the team.

- Leveraging alliances for support, resources, and influence.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Influence/Relationship Mapping: Identifying and mapping key stakeholders to understand their influence and build relationships.

Chapter 9: Keep Your Balance

Summary:

- Ensuring personal well-being and maintaining a work-life balance.

- Keeping oneself energized and focused amid the transition.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Personal Equilibrium: Maintaining a balance between professional pressures and personal well-being.

Chapter 10: Expedite Everyone

Summary:

- Facilitating and supporting others in the organization to manage their transitions effectively.

- Encouraging a culture of swift and smooth transitions.

Frameworks/Concepts:

- Transition Acceleration: Implementing systems and culture that expedite everyone’s transitions and adjustments.

# Frameworks

1. STARS Model

Framework:

- Start-up: Building an organization or project from scratch.

- Turnaround: Recovering a business or project that’s in trouble.

- Accelerated Growth: Managing and sustaining rapid expansion.

- Realignment: Revitalizing a once-effective organization.

- Sustaining Success: Maintaining performance and making improvements.

Steps and Example:

- Identify: Determine the state of the company or department you are joining.

- Adapt: Adjust your strategies to meet the demands of the STARS situation.

- Implement: Apply tailored approaches based on the identified context.

Example: If moving to a company in a Turnaround situation, focus on identifying critical issues, implementing quick fixes, stabilizing the situation, and then establishing a clear path for recovery and growth.

2. Learning Plan

Framework:

A systematic approach to understanding the organization, its culture, politics, and key success factors.

Steps and Example:

- Identify: Determine the areas crucial for understanding the business and your role.

- Prioritize: Choose which areas to focus on first based on immediate needs.

- Explore: Use resources, meetings, and observations to gain insights.

- Validate: Ensure your understanding is accurate and comprehensive.

Example: If you’re entering as a marketing manager, focus on understanding the company’s product portfolio, customer demographics, marketing channels, and competitive landscape. Engage with team members and analyze past campaigns to gain insights.

3. Early Win

Framework:

Choosing and achieving something visible and impactful quickly to establish credibility.

Steps and Example:

- Select: Identify an initiative that is achievable and visible.

- Plan: Develop a strategic plan to achieve the chosen early win.

- Communicate: Ensure everyone involved understands the goal and plan.

- Implement: Execute the plan and monitor its progress closely.

Example: As a new IT lead, an early win might be enhancing the speed and reliability of a critical internal tool that employees use daily. Achieving this would showcase your capability and positively impact daily operations.

4. Expectation Conversation

Framework:

A dialogue to clarify roles, resources, and timelines and ensure alignment between you and your supervisor.

Steps and Example:

- Prepare: Identify your goals, required resources, and potential challenges.

- Initiate: Begin the conversation with your supervisor, communicating your preliminary plan.

- Negotiate: Work together to align expectations and secure necessary resources.

- Confirm: Ensure clarity and agreement on all discussed points.

Example: Discuss your plans for the IT department, ensuring your supervisor understands the intended improvements, the resources needed, and the timeline for implementation. Ensure alignment on priorities and expectations.

5. Influence/Relationship Mapping

Framework:

Identifying and understanding the key stakeholders who can impact your role and initiatives.

Steps and Example:

- Identify: List the internal and external stakeholders relevant to your role.

- Map: Determine their influence and stance regarding your initiatives.

- Strategize: Develop approaches to manage relationships and leverage influence.

- Engage: Begin building relationships and alliances with the mapped stakeholders.

Example: Identify colleagues in other departments, senior leadership, and external partners who have a stake in your IT projects. Understand their expectations and concerns and build relationships that facilitate collaboration and support.