



# ONBOARD

Successfully navigating the first 100 days

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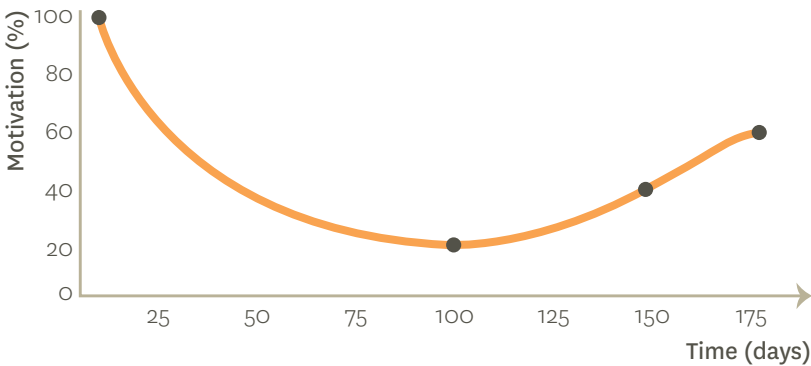
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You don't get a second chance to make a first impression.

The first 100 days can be among the most challenging and stressful of your career. At the same time, this period represents an enormous opportunity to deliver quick wins and position yourself as a rising star.

For most new starters, day one is characterised by a heady mix of nervous enthusiasm and eagerness to 'hit the ground running'. All too often, however, organisations take a 'sink or swim' approach towards onboarding: Having spent weeks being wooed through the recruitment phase, new starters arrive to find their manager is interstate for the week and their computer hasn't been set up. And so begins the first 100 days.



The Source's engagement model indicates that new starters' motivation levels will begin to drop from this very first day, often reaching their lowest ebb around the 100 day mark. Recovery from this point can be slow and negligible, leaving both manager and employee frustrated and disappointed.

The 100 day dip can be attributed to a number of factors, including: the realisation of the enormity of the task ahead; encountering barriers which weren't previously discussed; difficulty assimilating into the team; or simply learning the rules of engagement. Whether you are a head of procurement, category manager or an analyst, the pattern is the same.

The challenge for onboarding is to minimise the magnitude of the drop and accelerate the rate of recovery.

At the low point, managers need to coach and mentor new starters, helping them to reach a point where they feel empowered, able to work autonomously and leave each day with a sense of accomplishment.

The Source is committed to working with the brightest minds in procurement. We have commissioned this research to help you make a killer first impression that sets you up for fast, tangible success, as well as providing the tools to retain and onboard future new recruits.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those procurement professionals who have participated in this research, sharing intimate learnings and advice from their own onboarding experiences.

My best wishes to all those embarking on their 100 day journey.

Andrew MacAskill  
Managing Director, The Source



**The first 100 days is not a dress rehearsal.** In the hotly contested procurement market, attracting, selecting and engaging the brightest talent can be gruelling. When months of planning, preparation and process finally culminate in offering your dream candidate a role, many employers will believe the hard work is done. This is far from the truth.

**You only get one chance to make a first impression.** As soon as the new recruit walks through the door, the clock starts ticking. Judgements and opinions are swiftly formed on both sides of the relationship which can have long-lasting (and sometimes destructive) outcomes on the new alliance.

**Hope is not a strategy.** The first 100 days are the most accurate barometer of new employee's longer term performance. Stimulate and engage new hires during the onboarding phase and you will not only accelerate productivity, but in all likelihood extend their tenure. Disengage them with mixed messages or dishearten with tedious tasks and the costs and impact of a 'bad hire' can be far reaching.

**Deliver on expectations.** To reap the benefits of the recruitment process and achieve an ROI on people investments, employers need to take a 360 degree view of the induction process and ensure all parties are informed, aligned and stimulated.

The stories and advice shared here demonstrate that we need to apply the same rigour, planning and dedication to onboarding our employees, as we do to finding them.

Tania Seary  
Founding Chairman, The Source







*“Take the opportunity to really learn the business – you will not get the opportunity again to have a ‘look under the hood’ so don’t let other pressures thwart you from getting out, making connections and learning.”*



**Tony Jones**  
**Chief Procurement Officer**

150 days in role

**Did the position description/interview process match up with the reality of the job?**

As this was an entirely new position for the organisation, the position description was very light and acknowledged as such throughout the process. The interview process was great – long, but refreshingly personable! I knew I was going to be working with some individuals that I would get along with and have the support to carry out what was needed. The reality of the role has been exactly that – I have been given the space and time to work through the process.

**What approach did you adopt as CPO during your first 100 days?**

The 100 day plan I pulled together actually started before joining the business – the initial step was pre-reading on people, strategy, financial and operational information about the company. Covering what I expected of others and the initial deliverables’ targets, this 100 day plan became the foundation document for the recommendations made around structural changes.

My 100 day plan was to:

- gain a solid understanding of how the business operates
- identify and plan for the key issues and opportunities we face
- build relationships and agreeing the ‘way we work’ with:
  - my manager and the executive
  - functional heads and the organisation’s affiliates
  - any direct reports
- develop/recommend new structure for the procurement function
- align with senior management behind FY13 operating plan and procurement structure
- engage with and understand key internal/external stakeholders
- communicate procurement focus and establish communications channels.

**If you could have the first 100 days over, what would you do differently?**

I would clear more days in the diary to get out into the field. Visits to major sites were planned and delivered great connections; but were often too short, and trips to smaller areas were cancelled resulting in something of a knowledge gap. Entering a new industry, I would take more time to look at and understand the intricacies of the front end of the business. I am currently rectifying this and it is fascinating!

**What is the key to making the most of your first 100 days?**

Have a clear plan of what you think is expected of you; get that agreed with your boss and then deliver on it! Also, as you discover new information do not be afraid to adjust the plan to ensure you are focused on the things that actually matter to the business. Take the opportunity to really learn the business – you will not get the opportunity again to have a ‘look under the hood’ so don’t let other pressures thwart you from getting out, making connections and learning – those pressures will still come! Most of all, have fun and enjoy the learning experience.



**Paul Menzies**  
**Chief Procurement Officer**

75 days in role

**How would you compare the challenges of setting up a greenfield procurement operation versus inheriting an established one?**

As a CPO, if you could choose between a ‘brownfield’ versus a ‘greenfield’ site, you’d take the green start up every time because it allows you to set the foundations and start from a clean slate.

Brownfield sites naturally come with some inherent challenges: processes, policies and ways of working are sometimes non-existent, or have been only been partially developed. At times even mature structures and policies need to be revisited to ensure they are consistent with current objectives. Understanding the organisation’s level of maturity and their appetite for change will impact your ability to develop, influence and deliver effectively.

**How do you encourage stakeholder engagement during the first 100 days?**

This is critical – the plan is to create a knowledge hub that actually pulls customers in, rather than pushes information out and once you get this momentum happening it’s like a magnet. This is key to building the team’s credibility and influence within the organisation.

The aim of the hub is to familiarise the business with our commercial value proposition and to provide stakeholders with a snapshot of how a category has been managed in the past, current trends, and future strategy. We have two resources dedicated to setting up the knowledge hub. They are responsible for pulling together everything from policy to process, guidelines to market research, tools and templates, precedent agreements, delegated authorities and training programs. The goal is for the knowledge hub to be so in depth that stakeholders are willingly engaging with procurement.

**In terms of your key objectives, what level of focus have you placed on achieving quick wins?**

I’m fortunate that the business has taken a balanced view when it comes to achieving rapid savings – there’s no doubt that we have to deliver on some pretty big targets, but the business is supportive of us taking the time to make the right decisions that will set up a sustainable procurement strategy.

During my first 100 days, I have worked with senior management to develop a 27 point blueprint, and only one of those points speaks to the fiscal targets for this financial year. That said though, no CFO or CEO doesn’t want you to deliver a competitive cost advantage quickly!

**How would you rate your onboarding experience?**

My onboarding experience was very positive, though I believe responsibility for a successful onboarding doesn’t just rest with the organisation – there’s a certain amount of initiative you have to take as an individual. It is important to get the right message out in terms of what you are responsible for. Articulate your priorities, your values and the journey you intend to take your function on. If possible, seek a contribution piece in the internal newsletter or similar. For me, this was about letting the business know I am here to:

- develop a sustainable procurement capability
- put procurement processes, procedures and guidelines in place and whilst hitting the planned targets
- hit and exceed fiscal goals.



**At the CPO level, there are a myriad of factors to consider in determining the right career move. Did you seek counsel from peers or mentors in reaching your decision?**

When I was initially approached about the role, I took a couple of trusted people into my confidence.

It’s valuable to reach out and see what others think about it – particularly when joining a company that has experienced a period of upheaval, either with churn through the CPO level or within the organisation itself. The more you can bounce ideas off others, the more educated your view point will become and the more confidence you can take in your career decisions.

Additionally, having frank and open conversations with the CEO and CFO to understand the direction they’re taking the company allows you to test the situation and gauge your potential for impact, which contributes in your decision to take on the challenge.





**Deanna Lomas**  
**Chief Procurement Officer**

365 days in role

**How would you rate your onboarding process?**

The incredible level of support from my immediate manager was a key highlight during the onboarding process. It would have been ideal to have dedicated more time to developing an in depth knowledge of the business and taken the opportunity to meet with various business stakeholders earlier in my role. However, due to a number of business critical activities I was unable able to create the space for the right level of key stakeholder engagement outside the team until later down the track.

**What were your key objectives during your first 100 days?**

When commencing a new role, my priority is to build a relationship with the team. It was particularly important in this current role as there was some uncertainty amongst the team and establishing relationships was essential to create a level of stability. Due to a temporary reduction in the capacity of the team, one of my immediate objectives was to ensure support plans were in place to assist team members through one of the busiest times of the year.

**How do you manage the expectations of the business and demonstrate quick-wins during your first 100 days?**

Using a robust tracking tool to manage shifting priorities was immensely helpful, especially when there are so many competing demands. Investing time to ensure critical information is captured and that the state of play of each demand is known means that they can be effectively managed. Once you have uncovered opportunities for improvement within the business it is important to not pressure yourself to implement them all at once, instead identify one or two key opportunities which are quick wins that you can confidently deliver.

**How critical is the performance of a new team member during their onboarding phase to your perception of their future performance?**

This can depend at times on the level of the role. I would expect a senior level leader to be more self-driven in developing a plan for their first 100 days and then seek endorsement or alignment from their manager to make sure they are on-track. Less experienced team members may need more leader-driven support and guidance on how to develop their priority plan.

A 100 day plan more often than not sets up a new team member for success in the early days and hence, starts to build a perception of that person's performance both now and in the future. The more you invest in setting someone up for success in the first 100 days, the sooner that person will return value to the organisation and the more likely they will enjoy the work which in turn can lead to good performance.



*“Spending time to develop rapport and trust with your colleagues is a worthwhile investment as it will help to accelerate problem solving, introduce you to valuable contacts and offer the inside word on roadblocks, issues and opportunities.”*

## **Andrew Little**

### **Contractor**

55 days in role

#### **How did you approach the first 100 days in your new role?**

As a contractor or consultant you need to hit the ground running, so having a personal plan is critical. I follow a set process at the commencement of every contract:

- Read as many policies and procedures as possible to understand how the company operates.
- Don't be shy to ask lots of questions. I use the 'five whys' to understand exactly why things are done the way they are.
- Good introductions to the team is important to build strong working relationships.
- Identifying key contacts and stakeholders and letting them know that you are there as a support to them.
- Set up email folders and files to easily track your work so that on completion of the contract, information is easy to find.
- Defining and mapping out priorities and key delivery dates.

#### **As a contractor, how do you cope with the expectations to hit the ground running?**

Procurement contracting not only requires strong functional knowledge, but a flexibility of approach and mindset to adapt to new working environments, peoples' expectations and objectives and ways of working. It does get easier the more contracts you do, but essentially my approach is to:

- spend time in advance researching the company and its people
- ask questions and don't presume what worked in the last role will work in the new role
- understand the business' and managers' expectations
- know your own capabilities
- plan but remain flexible
- become one of the team.

#### **What is the key to making the most of your first 100 days?**

In contracting, 100 days might be all you have in a particular role so it's important to enjoy what you do and remain positive. Ingratiating yourself with the team will make the experience a lot more enjoyable – a common mistake made by contractors is to isolate themselves from the team in the belief they are just there to do a job and not make friends.

Spending time to develop rapport and trust with your colleagues is a worthwhile investment as it will help to accelerate problem solving, introduce you to valuable contacts and offer the inside word on roadblocks, issues and opportunities.



**Georgia Brandi**  
**Analyst**

300 days in role

**What attracted you to this particular role?**

There were three key factors which attracted me to the role. First, the role was a bookend approach to procurement incorporating strategic sourcing, analysis and supplier management. Secondly, the structure of the team, by category, appeared to enable specialisation and consistency in the role's responsibilities. This interpretation proved correct. The final incentive was working with people I already knew and respected for their procurement knowledge.

**Has your organisation implemented a professional development plan for you?**

In the first week a work performance process, including development planning, was introduced by a dedicated HR representative for Supply & Logistics.

Following this a collaborative approach was taken with my manager to establish a development plan. The plan is focussed on skills development objectives for the coming year, including checkpoints and training goals.

Stretch targets are also included for individual performance along with development opportunities. Key tasks are identified within category plans, and the overall team is structured to enable flexibility to provide support to other subcategories as required.

**During your first 100 days, what level of support did you receive from your team?**


The first week involved a structured onboarding process which not only focussed on an introduction to tasks and responsibilities but also systems and processes. For example, sessions were set up with HR for work performance system and policies, business systems to review the document management system and reporting, and the Supply & Logistics GM for a strategic overview of the department. I was also fortunate to have the role's predecessor still in the business to schedule introductions with key stakeholders and suppliers. It was an induction to the business not just the role.

**What three tips would you give to someone commencing their first 100 days?**

- 1. Understand data sources.** Focus on how to obtain information and do not rely on scheduled reporting. For example, if there is monthly spend reporting, seek to understand the source and whether you have access to the data. Learn how to access data for different time periods or by individual sites.
- 2. Schedule 'quick wins'.** Balance out 'quick wins' and major projects. That is, most roles initiate with a key project to complete in the first 3-6 months thus there may be delay in delivering value until the project is completed. Take advantage of prioritising and performing some small tasks well to keep you motivated and meet expectations of your stakeholders.
- 3. Embrace contracts.** Read the contract templates and understand the distinction between each. Know the standard terms of the business and minimum contract requirements. This will enable more efficient negotiations.







*In procurement, there is only a small pool of professional resources to draw on and you're going to run across the same people over and over again so leave a legacy to be proud of.*

**How has your previous experience helped you to navigate through the first 100 days?**

It has been absolutely critical. My previous market was quite tough, but it was a fantastic procurement nursery for learning to manage large, geographically spread spend, with complicated procurement issues and large systems issues around SAP and ERP.

The experience I gained from the coal, steel and mining industries has translated well into my current role in the energy sector. Procurement solutions are procurement solutions regardless of what you're dealing with – I think it's about being able to make judgement decisions and using your experience to determine how it all fits together and devise the best solution for the situation.

**How critical is the performance of a new team member during their onboarding phase to your perception of their future performance?**

I look for energy, enthusiasm, in-depth functional procurement knowledge and the ability to get along with people, both inside and outside the team, are essential. In procurement, we are a service organisation so unless procurement people have the ability to sell to our customers we're not going to survive. We have a strict focus on delivery, and I hold the same expectations for both contractors and permanent hires – we are all measured on outcomes and deliverables.

**Len Blackmore**  
Chief Procurement Officer

126 days in role

**What three tips would you give to a CPO commencing their first 100 days?**

- 1. It is critical to determine the culture of the company upfront.** Research the company using online resources, company reports etc. to ensure you go in with your eyes open. Also speak with people to pick up on the true culture and learn what you can expect after joining.
- 2. Be very clear on the company's expectations** of procurement as a function and document these.
- 3. It is important to exit your previous company and start with your new company on good standing.** In procurement, there is only a small pool of professional resources to draw on and you're going to run across the same people over and over again so leave a legacy to be proud of.





### RETENTION TOOLS

Our consultants have conducted interviews with hundreds of disgruntled and undervalued procurement professionals seeking a new challenge. Even though they may stay in a job for 12 to 24 months, many say their reasons for leaving were formed within the first 100 days of joining a new employer.

A number of key themes emerged from these conversations enabling The Source to create a retention toolkit to build loyalty and accelerate performance in the first 100 days and beyond...

### VISION

*Hammer home the vision.*

No.1 in your toolkit for fostering employee loyalty and motivating your ‘A players’ is ensuring that your procurement department has its own vision. A vision plays a key role in goal setting and planning, whilst aligning people in activities that cut across an organisation.

Striving towards a clearly defined and inspiring vision will serve as a catalyst for change and keep your team motivated and engaged.

*No vision, no retention.*

### ONBOARDING

*The spanner in the works.*

Establishing an organised, informative and pleasurable induction process will inevitably set you up for long term success, yet so many organisations get this wrong. Remember, this is a two way street. From day one, the new starter is evaluating the organisation, just as much as the organisation is assessing them.

Getting the basics right, such as ensuring that the workstation and technology are assembled, access passes and business cards are organised, will go a long way to making the right first impression. Assigning mentors, having key meetings in the diary and a documented onboarding schedule will have your latest hire firing on all cylinders in no time.

*Great retention starts in the first 100 days.*

### DEVELOPMENT

*Sharpen the saw.*

Top performers stay put when they have a clearly defined career path and their employer is ready and willing to invest in their development.

Ensure that each role within your team is defined and the competencies are clearly mapped for each level of progression. Have personal development plans in place for your team members – Australia is blessed with superb procurement training organisations such as The Faculty and CIPSA to assist in this regard.

Strive for best practice – regularly benchmark your procurement operation and your people against best in class and then use this information to build the business case for investing in development.

*Develop your team and implement succession plans to limit turnover.*

### LEADERSHIP

*Consistently nail it.*

More than 50 per cent of the best procurement and sourcing candidates want to leave because of an issue with their boss. The modern CPO’s job is not easy – we all recognise that, but motivating and subsequently retaining the best talent should be a priority.

The biggest complaint from candidates is that their leader shows a lack of authenticity and consistency. Think about the quality and quantity of communication with your team – recognise their achievements, keep it respectful and open and as a result even when times get tough they will remain loyal and engaged.

*Strong leadership curbs attrition.*

### REMUNERATION

*You know the drill.*

Money is never the only reason for leaving an organisation. However, given the procurement talent shortage your procurement superstars may frequently be offered large financial incentives to move.

Get your reward structure right and remunerate your best employees accordingly. Paying a notional five per cent raise to your best employees makes no business sense and can even be a cause of demotivation.

Understand the total cost of ownership associated with your team members – the cost of your top talent leaving is in excess of five times their salary. This ratio increases the more senior the role.

*Incentivise well and your team will remain intact.*



## Matthew Bonwick

### Analyst

150 days in role

#### How did the interview process equip you for meeting the challenges of your new role?

The information provided to me by the recruiter and the hiring manger aligned neatly with the reality of my new consulting role. The interview process provided a clear view of the scope of the role and the organisational culture. It also helped to confirm that I would enjoy working in the team and that the professional development opportunities I was seeking were available.

My role has developed steadily following the first 100 days which has been challenging yet rewarding. I have contributed to industry leading projects, gained a detailed end-to-end understanding of a mature procurement function and managed several small projects autonomously. None of these activities were explicitly mentioned in the position description but were in line with my expectations around developing from a support role to an independent contributor.

#### What challenges did you face during your first 100 days as a new consultant?

On this occasion, to hit the ground running was particularly difficult, as I had just returned from travelling through North, Central and South America for almost a year – so full-time work was a tough gig! By applying my past experience, demonstrating capability and seizing opportunities to expand my network, I was able to get up to speed with the current state of procurement. Starting my role over the Christmas period also meant that several major projects were wrapping up or waiting to commence in the new year.

#### What advice can you share with others embarking on their first 100 days?

- 1. Be realistic about your ability to add value early on.** Spend time understanding the organisation, your role and finding some quick wins.
- 2. Use your fresh eyes to identify big ticket areas for improvement,** but keep these ideas in your pocket until you have a proposed solution further down the track.
- 3. Be confident in the value of your experience in the new environment.** Listen carefully and communicate your experience and ideas to your new colleagues using language aligned to objectives and values of the new organisation.



## Lisa Williams

Contractor

120 days in role

### Did the position description align with the reality of the job?

The interview process clearly covered the main responsibilities, expectations and objectives of the role. During this time, I was able to explore the opportunities with my prospective manager, a stakeholder and peer which provided me with a 360 degree perspective of the role and by the end, I felt like I had a good understanding of what a 'typical day' might look like.

### How did you approach the first 100 days in your new role?

During my first 100 days, I familiarised myself as quickly as possible with the business' organisational structure and tried to gain an understanding of how the respective business units fitted and worked together. Effective stakeholder engagement was a priority during my onboarding period, particularly with regards to driving strategic procurement recommendations and accelerating value add outcomes.

### As a contractor, how do you cope with the expectations to hit the ground running?

As a contractor, there is an added expectation to hit the ground running and start delivering results immediately. My advice is to stay focused – know what your priorities for the contract period are and prioritise your workload accordingly. Be flexible and don't be afraid to challenge assumptions.

### What three tips would you give to someone new to contracting upon commencing their first 100 days?

- 1. Invest time in understanding the organisation:** its commercial needs, the operating context, the challenges, and the opportunities.
- 2. Make time to engage with stakeholders** and understand vendor capability. This is something that can be overlooked by contractors because there is such a pressure to deliver quickly. Ultimately, however, building strong relationships can expedite outcomes.
- 3. Develop a sourcing strategy** and spend time socialising this strategy with your manager and stakeholders to ensure buy-in.

*“Building strong relationships can expedite outcomes.”*







**Nick May**  
**Chief Procurement Officer**

150 days in role

**How did your organisation prepare you for embarking on your new leadership role?**

The opportunity to act in the role for a month while a candidate review took place allowed me to develop a better understanding of the challenges, the expectations and the scope of what lay ahead. Prior to that, my ongoing development plan allowed me to step into a short-term leadership role in a different business area. This pushed me out of my comfort zone challenging me to face new situations with little subject matter expertise, adding different perspectives and growing my aptitude for dealing with the 'somewhat unknown'.

**Having been promoted internally, how do you strike a balance between driving change and maintaining stability?**

When taking on a new role and looking to establish yourself by refreshing or revising the business direction, you can easily overlook the virtues and sensibilities of the strategy and direction that already exists. Before getting into solution mode it's important to establish a solid fact base by engaging the organisation and looking at the business from an internal, as well as an external perspective. This includes listening to customers and non-customers as well as talking to your own team.

**What were the main challenges that you faced during your first 100 days?**

The main challenge was mobilising three capable teams that had only recently come together to ensure the success of a new operating model. It is sometimes too easy to assume that everyone is clear on the reasons for change, the challenge that lies ahead and how their role contributes to the overall objectives. As a leader, the first step is to ensure you have clarity in your own mind on the answers to these issues and then to test the team's understanding to make sure everyone is on the same page.

**What three tips would you give to someone commencing their first 100 days?**

**1. Align your business.** Crystallise how your team's contribution will help deliver company objectives. Take the time to understand, not only your manager's expectations but the priorities of their boss. Mobilise your team around that aligned understanding and clarity of purpose.

**2. Communicate in simple company-wide language.** Beware of the knowledge curse! Avoid using procurement terminology as it can hinder your ability to effectively influence stakeholders. Be clear, concise, and align with the company's values and objectives.

**3. Manage expectations.** Leverage a fresh eyes approach and engage as widely as possible with your leaders, peers, team and across different stakeholder groups. This will help to establish a more accurate, enterprise wide perspective on procurement issues and help to manage expectations of yourself and your team.

**Richard Allen**  
**Chief Procurement Officer**

300 days in role

**What attracted you to this particular role?**

The organisation's brand is one of the strongest and most recognisable in the country. The scope, size and scale of the role were particularly appealing as was the change agenda which they was looking to undertake.

**How has your previous experience helped you to navigate the first 100 days?**

Drawing from past experiences at Fosters, BP and Coca Cola Amatil, the ability to identify successful strategies and structures, and how to implement them has helped guide me through the first 100 days. Previous experience has also taught me that successfully aligning with business stakeholders is essential in order for procurement to be impactful within the organisation.

**What challenges did you encounter during your first 100 days by not only changing organisations, but also industries?**

Starting a new role in a different organisation and different industry can be a steep learning curve. The main challenge in this particular role was understanding the strengths of the legacy environment and balancing this with some new thinking, strategy and process. When introducing change it is important to remember what has come before you and the contribution it has made to where the organisation is today. Developing a vision, providing clear and honest communication and effectively engaging all relevant stakeholders are essential to be an effective team.

**What is the key to making the most out of your first 100 days?**

Don't waste time and hit the ground running during your first 100 days. Be confident in your ability and trust yourself. More importantly, make sure you are accountable and do what you say you will.



*“When introducing change it is important to remember what has come before you and the contribution it has made to where the organisation is today.”*







**Steve Brown**  
**Chief Procurement Officer**

35 days in role

**What attracted you to this particular role?**

The opportunity to move into a new industry was particularly appealing. Having been in the FMCG industry for much of my career, it has been refreshing to take on new categories and industry challenges. The role is newly created within the organisation and has great breadth and scope. The organisation has global reach and recognises that in order to optimise competitive advantage, it needs to have an effective procurement capability. The Board has given me considerable support to run a program of transformational change.

**Taking on the role of CPO, have you documented a formal 100 day plan?**

I follow a formal 100 day plan which provides me with a framework for navigating my way through this onboarding period. My plan is broken into thirds: The first third is dedicated to listening and absorbing as much information as possible from the stakeholders without forming a judgement; the next third is about developing the strategic plan and testing it against what the business needs.

Lastly, the final third of my first 100 days will be about executing the plan and communicating with the broader procurement network within the company. In this particular role, clearly communicating procurement's direction is essential, especially since the tyranny of distance makes relationship management even more critical.

**How critical is the performance of a new team member during their onboarding phase to your perception of their future performance?**

It depends where the new hire is in their career. I have different expectations for a fresh graduate than for a more senior person. In a senior role, getting the first 100 days wrong can have far reaching consequences. Developing rapport, executing on expectations and demonstrating you are easy to work with, will all help a new starter to successfully assimilate. It is common knowledge that people form opinions based on first impressions, and to modify these takes a lot of energy – far better to get it right first time around.

**What three tips would you give to someone commencing their first 100 days?**

- 1. Active listening is critical.** Ask open questions so people have the chance to give more than yes or no answers.
- 2. As long as you don't breach your own values,** modify your behaviours to acclimatise to the business. People like to see that you want to fit in and connect.
- 3. Don't take yourself too seriously.** If you look like you are enjoying yourself and can take a joke, you give out positive energy. Be authentic, transparent and genuine. People are smart enough to know if you are putting on an act. Be trustworthy.

**Tony Manitta**  
**Category Manager**

300 days in role

**How did the interview process equip you for meeting the challenges of your new role?**

The role was described well in both the position description and by the briefing agency. I knew that joining a new organisation and learning about a new category would be a steep learning curve. The interview process left me feeling confident that my technical procurement knowledge and experience would translate well into the role, and that the organisation would support me while I developed my subject matter expertise in this new category.

**How do you effectively manage the business' expectations during the first 100 days?**

It's important to have a plan. Nobody expects you to work miracles in your first few days, so use the time to focus on the basics. Ensuring business continuity by renewing and extending contracts where required, obtaining access to systems and reporting tools, understand the category and company processes and policies. All of these are fundamentals to build on later with more strategic work. It's important to absorb as much information and knowledge as quickly as possible.

Also break down any early requests into smaller, more manageable tasks. There may be items you can deliver quickly with your previous experience, while others will take more time while you research the correct information.

**To hit the ground running during your first 100 days, what advice can you give?**

Don't be afraid to ask for help or a full download of information from technical experts within the business. Take advantage of hands on experiences such as operational site and supplier visits. There is also a wealth of information freely available on the internet or professional bodies to bolster your understanding of new concepts and technologies.

In larger organisations, take opportunities to volunteer for any committees or special projects, especially in cross-functional teams as these are great opportunities to network internally. Finally, be sure to plan your development and what you need to achieve during the first 100 days to succeed in your role.







## Baranee Tharan

### Category Manager

50 days in role

#### What is important to a new starter?

In general, when starting any new role, it is important to ensure that the new starter has all the tools and technology to perform their job effectively from day one. Having items such as laptops, system login details and mobile phones established and ready to go can set the tone for future performance. Familiarising yourself with the people who have connections with the service desk is always a bonus!

#### What were your key objectives during your first 100 days?

Meeting the team and getting to know who's who is definitely a priority. Building relationships with people within the organisation can also enhance your understanding of key business drivers, the procurement strategy and the various categories.

#### What three tips would you give to someone commencing their first 100 days?

- 1. Be open to change:** view change as an opportunity to learn. Understanding new ways on how to approach a problem is very beneficial and can broaden your skill set.
- 2. Build trust:** demonstrate your worth to an organisation by showing commitment and reliability. This will form a solid foundation whereby managers and peers will be confident in your ability deliver projects.
- 3. Communicate:** and ask as many questions as you can. Show that you care!





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**Let's talk.**

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