



THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL FOR WOMEN IN NATIONAL SECURITY

LEADING FOR CHANGE: KICKING OFF AN ADMINISTRATION

The transition from one administration to the next can be a chaotic and stressful period. Political appointees enter various agencies and offices where some career civil servants have spent their entire professional lives. Navigating these new roles, unknown processes, and the social dynamic of a new workplace can be overwhelming. However, being prepared with the right tools and mindset is the key to a successful and smooth transition.

BE PREPARED TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE

Generally, transition teams will draft plans to ease the transition for incoming appointees and resident career civil servants. While these plans serve as a good starting point, many teams focus on agendas and policies while shortchanging logistical support found in a typical onboarding process. Be prepared to experience a lack of certainty and clarity in your daily rhythm, contact other members of your team for help, or even to find where your personal office is located. The more willing you are to jump into new situations, the more quickly you will gain the confidence necessary to be successful in your new role.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS FIRST

Political appointees can often try to start delivering immediately on the administration's agenda. Before starting, however, it is valuable to understand the big picture of how the agency or office works. Connect with those who are not political appointees and learn about how the office operates, the internal culture, who can be your advocates, and who the roadblocks could be. In addition, be deliberate in building your personal and professional networks inside and outside of your new workplace.

REMEMBER SOCIAL CAPITAL IS VALUABLE

As you build your personal and professional relationships, use the cumulative knowledge of your network to better understand your environment. What is typical versus what is controversial can generally be determined by a quick query to those with whom you have built a relationship. Be intentional in how you interact with others because the impact your social interactions can have on your professional work can be either positive or negative. While the bureaucratic processes may sometimes be overly cumbersome and slow, circumventing established processes too often can negatively affect your reputation among your colleagues and lead to additional difficulties later.

CONFIDENCE IS KEY

It can take years to become confident in your ability to be successful in your new role. Everyone experiences the feeling of figuring out how to meet new professional challenges as they go. Believing that you belong is key to building the necessary confidence to be successful in your role.

This information summarizes LCWINS' Session 2: Leading for Change: Kicking off an Administration, moderated by Rosa Brooks and featuring panelists Mona Sutphen, Heather Samuelson, and Shelly Stoneman. For more information, visit us at <https://www.lcwins.org/>.

Even in progressive administrations, women may experience underrepresentation and must demand inclusion in key decision-making bodies. Confidently advocate for yourself and those around you.

SKILLSETS TO DEVELOP FOR SUCCESS

- Remain calm under pressure because the pressure will come from all angles.
- Issue spotting is essential; anticipate needs and be proactive regarding future concerns.
- Nimbleness with constant reprioritization of tasks and duties is key; roll with the changes because they will not stop.