

# New Manager's To-Do List

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# After this presentation, you'll

- Have a deeper understanding of the strategic priorities for how to spend your time
- Have a concrete example of a “To-Do” list for twelve weeks of your life as a manager
- Have the basis of a strategy for your group's long-term success



# The transition to management can be rough...

- ➡ Most Publications Managers come up from the ranks of technical writing
- ➡ Most do not have degrees in business management
- ➡ Many are not provided with specific management training
- ➡ Some are just thrown into a “sink or swim” situation



# And Tech Pubs management is challenging!

- ➡ Your manager may understand little about the publications function
- ➡ Tech pub budgets tend to be cut early in downturns
- ➡ Tech pub groups are prone to destabilizing reorganization



# The new manager's To Do list

- ➡ Build **trust** with your team, your manager
- ➡ Start keeping **statistics**
- ➡ Start developing a content /architecture **specification**
- ➡ Learn your group's **skills, training needs**
- ➡ Start building a **network** of potential supporters



## To Do list... (more)

- ➡ Start profiling your target **users**
- ➡ Start implementing the documentation **life cycle** (IPMM)
- ➡ *Bonus points for:*  
*Stamping out **whining** about grammar and engineers*



# 1. Build trust with your team

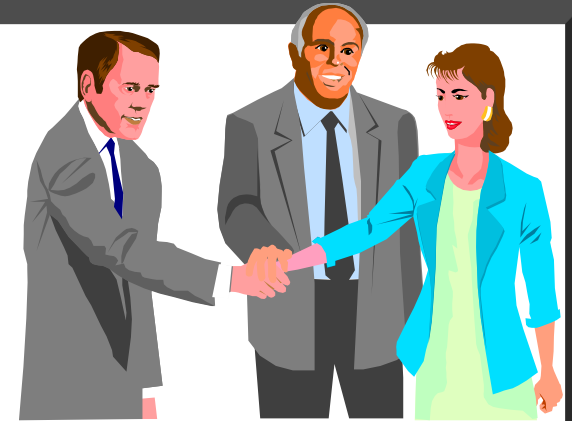


***Your team's commitment is the foundation of your success***

- ➡ Get to know your team members, one-on-one
- ➡ Share your vision for short- and medium-term goals, get their input
- ➡ Pass along all the management information you can



## 2. Build trust with your manager



### *Your manager's support is the key to resources*

- Learn your company's objectives and strategy
- Develop a plan to support those objectives
- Start informing your manager about your group's activities. Be persistent.
- Learn and respect your manager's communication style.



### 3. Start keeping statistics



***Statistics are the starting point for process improvement***

- ➡ Ask writers to isolate and report the time spent on each activity (design, writing, fixing, finalizing)
- ➡ Set up a simple spreadsheet for that information
- ➡ Ask developers and testers to report the time spent on technical review and testing.



## 4. Develop a specification

### *Specs are the key to cost-effective development*

- ➡ Start by identifying your current Best Practices
- ➡ Focus on specifying:
  - information architecture (User Guides, Help Screens...)
  - information modules (procedures, definitions...)
- ➡ Don't focus on spelling and grammar
- ➡ Appoint a writer to lead the project



## 5. Identify skills, training needs



### *Training motivates and prepares for the future*

- ➡ Understand the needs of your technology environment
- ➡ Identify your team's skills and weaknesses
- ➡ Develop learning plan to support corporate goals

***No training budget?*** Use independent study



## 6. Build a support network



### *Supporters will look out for your interests*

- ☞ Identify the key players in your world
  - **engineers, marketers, trainers, call center, financial controllers**
- ☞ Establish a direct relationship with each one
- ☞ Give information about your activities
- ☞ Identify how you can help them (and they can help you)



## 7. Build user profiles



***Knowing your users is  
THE key added value***

- ➡ Get information from your friends in training and customer support
- ➡ Mine the Internet
- ➡ Create a set of user profile matrices



## 8. Implement the IPMM

***The IPMM is a road map for improvement***

- ➡ Learn your company's position in the CMM
- ➡ Where is your group now in the IPMM?
- ➡ Set your goal to move to the next step of the IPMM



# How to make it happen? One step at a time.

👉 Here's that practical To-Do list



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