NEW MANAGER ASSIMILATION PROGRAM (Also known as NMAP, JumpStart, Executive OnBoarding etc.)

The New Manager Assimilation Program is a one-day program designed to provide a forum for a new manager and his/her team to develop an early understanding of their respective operating styles, communication patterns and business priorities so that they can quickly work together to effectively address critical business needs and issues. The program can be used with equal effectiveness with internal managers taking over a new team or assignment, or with managers coming in from the outside. With external hires at a management level, the program should be one part of a larger, structure assimilation process.

The program uses as its framework the work of John Gabarro, a professor of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management at Harvard Business School. In his book, *The Dynamics of Taking Charge*, Gabarro reported five distinct phases of management integration into a new business. The first two phases, called Taking Hold and Immersion, are focused on orientation and learning and generally take up to 18 months. The New Manager Assimilation Program is designed to considerably shorten that time frame to allow the new manager to arrive more quickly at Phase 3, Reshaping, in which he/she begins to implement his/her own business strategy. First developed as a program by the U.S. Army, it has since been used in a wide range of multi-national corporations, including Citigroup, Exxon, Ford Motor Co., GE, J.P. Morgan Chase Morgan Stanley and Zurich Re.

The program can be conducted in many different formats. The most common is an agenda of 4 core facilitated segments totaling approximately 8 hours. It can be conducted all in one day or broken up over two days in various ways. More elaborate designs include a series of pre-program interviews with direct reports and/or additional staff. A Stakeholder Analysis segment can also be added to the beginning of the program. This segment is especially useful for a manager coming in from the outside as it provides him/her with the team's view of the key internal and external stakeholders for the business and the business's current effectiveness with each. It has also been extremely useful for managers to follow the program with a day-long strategic planning session..

For all formats, it is essential that the facilitator speak with the new manager, the new manager's manager, and the Senior Human Resources Officer in the business to get a preliminary picture of the business and to set expectations for the outcome.

The core segments of the NMAP (running approximately 2-3 hours each) are:

- **A. PARTICIPANT INPUT SESSION:** Direct reports and other participants meet as a group with a (the) facilitator(s) to generate questions for the manager, to offer information about the team and to develop a list of the major challenges they feel the business is facing. The group addresses 6 questions during this section:
- 1. What do we already know about the manager?
- 2. What do we not know about the manager, but would like to know?
- 3. What do we want most from the manager?
- 4. What does the manager need to know about us as a team?
- 5. What are the major issues the business will face in the next 12 months?
- 6. What are your specific suggestions for addressing these issues?
- **B. MANAGER REVIEW SESSION:** The manager meets with the facilitator(s) and goes over the participants' input which will be provided to the manager in a collective format and without attribution.
- **C. MANAGER RESPONSE SESSION:** The manager and participants meet as a team with the facilitator(s) present so that the manager can address the group's questions and concerns in an open discussion
- **D. MANAGER DEBRIEF SESSION:** The manager meets with the facilitator to review the session, clarify action items and commitments, and plan for the follow-up session in 6 months.

Several materials can be used in support of the program, either as pre-reading or takeaways. These include John J. Gabarro's, *The Dynamics of Taking Charge*, published by Harvard Business School Press, Gabarro's Harvard Business Review article which preceded the book entitled "When A New Manager Takes Charge," and an article from the Conference Board Magazine, Across The Board, entitled "Changing of the Guard." These materials will give participants some background on the program and a greater understanding of its purposes and objectives.