

# COURSE TWO: LEARNING TO LEAD

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## BY THE END OF THIS COURSE, YOU WILL:

- Reflect on what you need to know related to The Road, the role of director of member development, my chapter, my campus and the International Fraternity.
- Create a list of specific things you want to learn more about for your position.
- Develop a learning plan on what they need to know to be successful as the director of member education.

## STEPS:

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### 1. READ

Take a few minutes to read through a story taken from *The First 90 Days* by Michael D. Watkins

READ NOW

### 2. TAKE ACTION

Over the next two weeks, take time to complete the following actions

BEGIN HERE

- Develop a list of questions you need answered
- Identify 7-10 people who will provide you with the best information about The Road: The Journey to Excellence.
- Schedule a time and meet with each person.

### 3. REFLECT

Complete the Reflection Questions in this packet.

RESPOND NOW

# READ:

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Taken from: *The First 90 Days* by Michael D. Watkins

Chris Hadley headed the quality assurance function at Dura Corporation, a medium-sized software company. When Chris's boss left to become vice president of operations at Phoenix Systems, a struggling software developer, he asked Chris to join him as head of the product quality and testing unit. Although it was a lateral move, Chris jumped at the opportunity to lead a turnaround.

Dura was a world-class software development operation. Chris had joined the company right out of engineering school and had risen rapidly in the quality function. He was highly skilled; however, he had grown up in an environment with state-of-the-art technology and a motivated workforce. Having visited the Phoenix product testing group before taking the job, Chris knew that it did not come close to measuring up. He was determined to change that—and quickly.

Soon after arriving, Chris declared Phoenix's existing processes outdated and went on record as saying that the operation needed to be rebuilt from the ground up "the Dura way." He immediately brought in operations consultants, who delivered a scathing report, characterizing the Phoenix's testing technology and systems as "antiquated" and the skills of the workforce as "inadequate." They recommended a thorough reorganization of the product testing process as well as substantial investments in technology and worker training. Chris shared this information with his direct reports, saying that he planned to act quickly on the recommendations, starting with the reorganization of the product testing teams "the way we did things at Dura."

Only a month after the new structure was put in place, productivity in the unit plummeted, threatening to delay the launch of a key new product. Chris convened his direct reports and urged them to "get the problems fixed, and fast." But the problems remained, and morale throughout the operation slumped.

After only two months in his new role, Chris's boss told him "you've alienated just about everyone. I brought you here to improve quality, not tear it down." His boss then peppered him with questions: "How much time did you spend learning about the operation? Did you know they've been asking for more investment for years? Have you seen what they were able to accomplish before you arrived with the resources they were given? You've got to stop doing and start listening."

Shaken, Chris held sobering discussions with his managers, supervisors, and groups of workers. He learned a lot about the creativity they had displayed in dealing with the lack of investment in the operation. He also got direct feedback about what was not working with his new structure. He called an all hands meeting and announced that, based on the feedback he had received, there would be significant adjustments to the structure. He also committed to upgrading testing technology and training before making any other changes.

What did Chris do wrong? Like many new leaders, he failed to focus on learning about his new organization and so make some bad decisions that undercut his credibility.

# TAKE ACTION:

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OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. Develop a list of questions you need answered
2. Identify 7-10 people who will provide you with the best information about The Road: The Journey to Excellence and meet with each of them.



As you begin your role as the director of member development the temptation will be great to act, to dive in and get started. You may even experience the previous officer handing over the reins and stepping to the side immediately. This course will help guide you through a process of learning what you need to know so you can effectively focus your efforts. Learning is an investment of your time and to maximize the return you must effectively and efficiently utilize the information you gain as a result.

## 1. DEVELOP A LIST OF QUESTIONS YOU NEED ANSWERED

Before you jump into your new position, it is important to assess where your chapter is with The Road. You don't want to reinvent the wheel or continue on a path that has not been successful. Take to time develop questions you need answered. It is helpful to think of your questions in the past, present and future.

Below are example questions, with additional space for you to add your own.

### PAST

- How has the chapter performed with The Road in the past? Have the members been satisfied with The Road?
- What sections of The Road: The Journey to Excellence implemented?
- Who was resistant to implementing The Road: The Journey to Excellence?
- What factors contributed to the success of The Road: The Journey to Excellence? What factors contributed to the failure of The Road: The Journey to Excellence?
- What efforts have been made to change the chapter? What happened?
- Who has been instrumental in shaping the chapter?

## CURRENT

- What does success in member education look like for the chapter? What strategy are we using to accomplish this?
- Is the chapter really pursuing success? If not, why not? If so, will the current strategy take the organization where it needs to go?
- Who is capable, and who is not?
- Who is trustworthy, and who is not?
- Who has influence, and why?
- What small or early wins could we achieve with The Road: The Journey to Excellence?

## FUTURE

- What areas of The Road is the organization most likely to face challenges in the coming year? What can be done now to prepare for them?
- What barriers need to be eliminated to be successful with The Road: The Journey to Excellence?
- What needs to change to be successful?

## 2. IDENTIFY YOUR BEST SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Now you need to figure out who can provide you with information and insight based on the questions you have developed. There are four groups we recommend you focus to gather your information.

- Chapter members — identify 3-5 members who are engaged in the chapter
- Previous/current executive board members — identify 2-3 officers who work with or support The Road
- Chapter advisor — identify one advisor
- Campus professionals/Greek advisor — identify one campus professional

|   | NAMES: |
|---|--------|
| Chapter Member                          |        |
| Chapter Member                          |        |
| Chapter Member                          |        |
| Chapter Member                          |        |
| Chapter Member                          |        |
| Previous/current executive board member |        |
| Previous/current executive board member |        |
| Previous/current executive board member |        |
| Chapter advisor                         |        |
| Campus professionals/Greek advisor      |        |

*Remember: Your questions may need to change or adjust based on who you are meeting with. The campus professional probably doesn't know what the chapter strategy is, but you could ask what strategy you could use to utilize campus resources to offer member education programs for your chapter.*



THE JOURNEY AHEAD IS  
**YOURS FOR  
THE TAKING**

