



# Executive Education

**TAKING CHARGE:  
TRANSITION  
STRATEGIES FOR  
NEW BUSINESS LEADERS**

[About Us](#) | [Programs](#) | [Participants & Alumni](#) | [Faculty](#) | [On & Off Campus](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Apply Online](#) | [Request Brochures](#)

[Exec Ed Home](#)  
[HBS Home](#)  
[Contents](#)  
[FAQ](#)

[Comprehensive General Management](#) | [Owner-Managed](#) | [Business Strategy](#)  
[Financial Management](#) | [Leadership and Change](#) | [Marketing](#) | [Negotiation and Managerial Decision Making](#)  
[Personal Development](#) | [Social Enterprise](#) | [Technology and Operations Management](#)

## Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders

### Venues/Dates

Mar 19 - 22, 2002

### Fee

\$5,000

### Summary

This program arms senior managers with an integrated, systematic approach for strategically managing transitions to major leadership positions.

### Contents

[Managing Leadership Transition for Career and Organizational Success](#)

[Participants](#)

[Program Objectives](#)

[Program Focus](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Learning Environment](#)

[Program and Admission Requirements](#)

[Application Process](#)

TRY OUR ONLINE RESOURCE  
**Leadership  
 Transitions**

[Top](#)

## Managing Leadership Transition for Career and Organizational Success

New leaders' actions during the first few months on the job have a disproportionate impact on their ultimate success or failure. Transitions are pivotal times, in part because everyone is expecting change to occur. And since new leaders don't know the organizations and haven't developed solid working relationships or personal support systems, transitions also are periods of great vulnerability. The new boss, subordinates, other employees, and key external stakeholders all are forming early impressions that will powerfully shape their expectations and actions, either enlarging or restricting every new leader's scope for action. Whether moving between functions, business units, or companies, transitioning into a new job poses a demanding set of imperatives for the incoming leader. If you can build momentum during the transition, it will continue

to propel you throughout your tenure in your new position. If you can't, you will be pushing a boulder uphill for the rest of your time in the job. To build momentum, you must acquire knowledge quickly, establish new working relationships, build an effective management team, and develop processes for making critical strategic and organizational decisions. In addition, you must juggle both organizational and personal transitions and manage expectations—all while maintaining personal equilibrium through self-management. But how?

A framework for planning and prioritizing your actions is key to meeting this important leadership and change challenge, and **Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders** provides it. Based on the work of Michael Watkins (coauthor with Dan Ciampa of *Right from the Start: Taking Charge in a New Leadership Role*) and Michael Roberto (an expert in top management decision making), this Harvard Business School Executive Education program was recently developed to arm participants with an integrated, systematic approach for strategically managing transitions to major leadership positions.

New leaders learn how to overcome their vulnerabilities, avoid common pitfalls, build high-performing management teams, and lead decision processes. Perhaps most important, this innovative learning opportunity prepares leaders to build momentum fast by securing early wins and laying a foundation for improved performance. Ultimately, participants master the art of taking charge at critical junctures in their careers, thereby jump-starting their next moves up the corporate ladder and successfully leading their organizations over the long term.

[Top](#)

## Navigating the Twists and Turns of Leadership Transition

### Assembling a Powerful Mix of Participants

**Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders** is intended for senior managers with newfound responsibility for significant business units—ideally, units with \$100 million or more in revenues. The program also is highly appropriate for individuals assuming functional leadership positions in business units, as well as for those taking on leadership roles at new organizations. The program, however, is not geared toward new CEOs.

*Participant titles include but are not limited to:*

- Executive vice president
- General manager
- Vice president

[Top](#)

## Defining the Program's Objectives

The primary goal of **Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders** is to arm participants with a strategic framework and action-oriented guidelines and tools for transitioning to new leadership positions. By focusing on the unique challenges facing executives during their transitions, the program helps participants increase their likelihood of long-term success by enhancing their ability to:

- Identify the challenges associated with different types of transitions;
- Establish personal credibility with peers, subordinates, and others in the organization;
- Accelerate their transitions and those of key subordinates;
- Create and lead high-performing teams;
- Respond faster to competitive challenges; and
- Improve performance and processes to deliver results early in the game.

[Top](#)

---

## Detailing the Program's Focus

The multipart curriculum is developed around core principles for guiding leadership transition and preparing leaders to take charge more effectively. The first component is a detailed personal assessment inventory, which is completed prior to the program's start. As a result, participants become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and arrive on campus with a better understanding of their individual leadership styles.

**Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders** is designed to build on this self-knowledge and engage participants in three days of intensive instruction, exploration, and interaction. Utilizing a powerful combination of faculty lectures, case studies, group discussions, simulation exercises, and speaker presentations, the course exposes executives to expert advice and proven transition strategies for taking charge in new leadership roles.

## Curriculum Topics

### Pre-entry Learning and Planning

- Diagnosing the new situation—startup, sustaining success, realignment, or turnaround?
- Identifying challenges and resources unique to the situation
- Gaining knowledge about the organization's strategy, technologies, culture, and politics
- Determining what needs to be done—and when

### Relationship Building with the Boss

- Negotiating and aligning expectations
- Interacting to foster understanding and trust
- Assuming responsibility for the relationship

- Initiating key conversations

### Team Design and Leadership

- Building the right team ("keepers" vs. "nonkeepers")
- Managing team decision-making processes
- Accelerating the transition of subordinates
- Coalition Building
- Identifying key influencers—internally and externally
- Establishing appropriate networks for advice, counsel, and support

### Organizational Alignment

- Taking the lead as "architect" of strategy, structure, systems, and skills
- Identifying problematic misalignments
- Working to achieve greater coherence

### Early Wins

- Energizing people and building momentum
- Tackling problems to yield tangible results in short timeframes
- Creating models of behavior and overseeing processes
- Introducing initiatives consistent with both short- and long-term goals

### Self-Management

- Avoiding common traps
- Developing coping mechanisms for managing stress and maintaining emotional stability
- Balancing viewpoints and exercising clear-headed judgment
- Assessing strengths and weaknesses for greater self-awareness

Top

---

## Acquiring a Framework for Gaining Momentum and Posting Early Results

### Working with the World's Most Experienced Business Leaders

This Harvard Business School Executive Education program is designed and taught by HBS faculty who have outstanding academic credentials, are authors of ground-breaking books and articles, and are **leading authorities** in their respective fields. As board members, consultants, and field researchers, they have an immeasurable wealth of real-world expertise. They also are **recognized experts** on global business and management issues—and maintain relationships with top companies around the world.

Short biographical sketches are presented below; more detailed biographies are accessible online at [www.hbs.edu/fac](http://www.hbs.edu/fac).

**Michael A. Roberto**, Assistant Professor, is a member of the General Management Unit at Harvard Business School and faculty cochair of this program. He teaches the Competition and Strategy course to first-year students in the MBA Program, as well as the Policy and Management seminar in the Doctoral Program. In his research, Professor Roberto studies strategic management decision-making processes—specifically, how managers make decisions efficiently and build consensus for effective implementation. He also examines the function and leadership of senior management teams, focusing on modes in which teams operate and ways in which leaders garner executive advice and input. Professor Roberto is the author of several professional articles, including "Strategic Decision-Making Processes: Moving Beyond Painful Trade-offs," which was published in the Academy of Management's Best Paper Proceedings, 2000 edition, and earned him the Robert Litschert Best Doctoral Student Paper Award in the Business Policy Division. His most recent article, "What You Don't Know about Making Decisions," is forthcoming in the *Harvard Business Review*.

**Michael Watkins**, Associate Professor, teaches Corporate Diplomacy, a popular elective course at Harvard Business School, and serves as faculty cochair for this program. He teaches in the Program on Negotiation for senior executives at Harvard Law School as well. Focusing his research on negotiation and leadership, Professor Watkins also consults with leading private- and public-sector organizations on negotiation and coalition building. Prior, he was an associate professor of public policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government where he taught negotiation and conducted research on international diplomacy and the management of organizational transformation. Professor Watkins is coauthor with Dan Ciampa of *Right from the Start: Taking Charge in a New Leadership Role* and of the new book, *Winning the Influence Game: What Every Business Leader Should Know about Government* (with Mickey Edwards and Usha Thakrar). He also is the author of the newly published *Taking Charge in Your New Leadership Role: A Workbook*. His next book, *Breakthrough International Negotiation: How Great Negotiators Transformed the World after the Cold War* (with Susan Rosegrant), will be published in fall 2001.

[Top](#)

## Experiencing the Harvard Approach to Reality-based Learning

### Redefining the Dimensions of Learning

In its depth, variety, and staying power, the Harvard Business School Executive Education experience is unlike any other in the world. What sets HBS apart are the **myriad dimensions of learning** offered, especially its often-imitated case study method. This approach gives participants the opportunity to explore a wide variety of **real-life business scenarios**—often with the added perspectives of the faculty who developed the cases and know the actual outcomes.

Participants **analyze case studies** individually, in group discussions, and through team projects. Putting themselves in the positions of the managers involved, they must analyze facts, define problems, compare alternatives, **formulate solutions**, commit to an action plan, and sell colleagues on the merits of their respective positions. Debate and interactive discussion are integral parts of the case study experience. This learning by analogy forces participants to **challenge conventional thinking** and identify the issues and lessons directly relevant to their own work situations—enhancing the takeaway value for the sponsoring organizations.

In addition to case studies, faculty members use multiple learning approaches tailored to fit their teaching objectives. These include a variety of methodologies—from lectures and guest speakers...to **multimedia presentations**, computer simulations, and Internet explorations...to group discussions and special exercises. Comfortable amphitheater-style seating encourages optimal interaction among participants and faculty.

One of the most powerful forms of learning is peer-group interaction. Every facet of the program—from the selection of participants...to the design of living groups and project groups...to team building and social activities—is purposefully structured to promote **dynamic interchange and shared learning** among a **diverse group of peers**. This constant interchange produces a rich pool of knowledge and allows participants to share their professional experiences, challenge and motivate one another, **and provoke new ways of thinking**.

Out of class, participants have ready access to Baker Library, **the largest business library in the world**, as well as a **research and technology lab** with state-of-the-art audio and computer hookups, imaging workstations, large-screen projection systems, and high-speed Internet access.

Harvard Business School educates leaders on how to use all these tools to their best advantage when they are back on the job and **applying their learning**. All Executive Education programs are designed with the philosophy that the participants' time in the classroom is simply the **launching point** of their educational experience.

### Living in an Environment that Stimulates Ideas

Harvard Business School understands that **executives learn best from one another**—in an atmosphere that stimulates teamwork and collaboration. For this reason, Executive Education participants live in suites of private rooms arranged around a common area, offering both **privacy and ready access to colleagues**.

Living quarters are outfitted with an extensive range of electronic tools to enhance both the depth of learning and the executives' technological skills. Every participant's room is **equipped with a personal computer** loaded with Microsoft® Office and a high-speed **Internet** connection.



Executive Education participants may wish to complement the rigorous mental stimulation with a workout at the Shad Hall **athletic facility and fitness center**, which houses basketball, racquetball, and squash courts; an indoor track; outdoor tennis courts; and a full range of conditioning equipment. Harvard University's Blodgett Pool is available for recreational use as well. Participants also enjoy strolling across the **picturesque campus**, jogging along the Charles River, or crossing the footbridge to take in the lively atmosphere of Harvard Square.

Top

---

## Qualifying for Admission

Enrollment is limited to a select, qualified group of senior managers with newfound leadership responsibilities. Ideal candidates include individuals taking charge of business units or assuming functional leadership positions in business units, as well as those taking on leadership roles at new organizations.

Professional achievement and organizational responsibility are the main criteria for admission to **Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders**. In addition, proficiency in written English is required, and participants must be fluent in the English language to take an active part in fast-moving discussions. There are no formal educational requirements.

HBS Executive Education programs are as **beneficial to sponsoring companies** as they are to the executives enrolled in the programs, and HBS expects **equal commitment** to the program from each participant and company. While participants devote time and intellectual resources to the effort, sponsoring companies must agree to assume all fees, provide for reasonable expenses, and **relieve participants of their work responsibilities** during the program.

Top

---

## Applying to the Program

To apply for participation in this program, you may [submit your application online](#). If you prefer, you may [download the application](#) and send it to the address or fax listed on the form.

The Admissions Committee recommends that all applications be received at least six weeks before the program start date. The Admissions Committee begins reviewing applications approximately three to four months prior to the start of the program. Qualified candidates will be admitted on a rolling, space-available basis. Programs often fill to capacity, so early application is strongly encouraged.

## Investing in Knowledge

The fee for **Taking Charge: Transition Strategies for New Business Leaders** is \$5,000 and includes tuition, books, case materials, accommodations, and meals. Fees are due 30 days before the start of the program. Cancellation policies are outlined in the admissions package, which the applicant will receive upon acceptance into the program.

[Top](#)

---

**If you have any questions about this information, please contact our Course Consultants at:**

Executive Education Programs  
Harvard Business School  
Soldiers Field  
Boston, MA 02163-9986 U.S.  
E-mail: [executive\\_education@hbs.edu](mailto:executive_education@hbs.edu)  
Telephone: 1-800-HBS-5577  
(outside the U.S., dial +1-617-495-6555)  
Fax: 1-617-495-6999

[Apply Online](#)

[Request a Brochure](#)

[Send to a Friend](#)

Fees, faculty, course content, and dates are subject to change.

For a window into the intellectual capital of HBS and other expertise from around the world, visit: [hbsworkingknowledge.hbs.edu](http://hbsworkingknowledge.hbs.edu)

[Top](#)

---