

Managing diverse teams, demonstrating vision and guiding groups toward a common goal are just a few of the opportunities members have to foster their leadership skills. As Roy, a member of the Krannert Graduate club, notes, “The feedback loop and abundant opportunities to take on leadership roles in club activities have shaped the future of the Krannert graduate MBAs, vis-à-vis business leaders.”

Business Skills Beyond Business Schools

Although the Krannert club was established for MBA students, the Krannert School of Management found that scope too narrow; there was too much of a demand from beyond the business school. “Over the years, significant amount of interest from the Purdue University community has made it imperative that we open the club for the greater good,” Roy says. “Even then, the primary focus of the club’s activities revolves around business topics and networking opportunities.”

It’s not surprising that other clubs have also seen this expansion of membership. The Toastmasters program is an ideal fit with the mission of higher education institutions. And improved skills and increased confidence are results that everyone seeks and supports.

As Luo notes, “Strong public speaking and leadership skills are essential tools of successful individuals in business and life.” And that’s good business sense. **T**

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Tips for Starting a New Job

By Eugene Yiga, CC

Starting a new job can be tough. In addition to navigating relationships and expectations, you have to figure out the little quirks of that office copier. But with these five simple ideas, you can achieve success:

- ▶ **Define your role.** If you didn’t do so during your interview or when finalizing your contract, now is the time to meet with your boss and define your role. Ask what the company’s top priorities are and what is expected of you. Then ask to have regular feedback sessions to evaluate your progress based on these objectives.
- ▶ **Avoid office politics.** Every office has its sensitive topics, and it can be very easy for “the new guy” to quickly get sucked into taking sides. Don’t waste your time with this. If you have to listen to the conversations, do so silently. And if you really must voice an opinion, make sure whatever you say behind someone’s back is something you would gladly say to his or her face. Dissension and disrespect will tear any team apart.
- ▶ **Ask questions.** As you learn how things work, you’ll probably see processes that don’t make sense and could be better if done differently. But before making suggestions to revolutionize the company, ask questions so you understand why the processes are that way in the first place.
- ▶ **Develop your skills.** Different companies want different skills, so find out which ones your employer is looking for. Improve your knowledge by subscribing to industry-specific blogs so you can gain deeper insight into the competitive environment and bring relevant ideas to the table.
- ▶ **Raise your game.** Be a leader by taking on additional challenges. Find useful things to do in your spare time instead of waiting to be assigned work. During your feedback sessions with your boss, ask if there are projects you can volunteer for and other ways you can contribute more. Even if it’s not part of your job, taking the initiative will set you apart.

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