

# FEELING UNCERTAIN?

**Are you feeling a bit flat about your new job? Wondering if you have made the right decision? Beginning to doubt yourself?**

This is not uncommon and you need to know that. For most people this feeling passes.

Where you were once fully competent do you now feel like a novice? Where people once listened to you and you had influence, are you now the listener and have to learn to influence others in a different context? Is the new crowd different from the old crowd and you still haven't made good friends?

Starting a new job is a significant change for many people and after the initial excitement, the hard work can kick in. There is so much to learn!

## HERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT CAN HELP:

### 1 Refer back to the reason you wanted this job in the first place.

Turn back to the exercise in the Introduction section of this workbook about why you wanted this job.

Keep your focus on that. Try to spend more time on these areas.

### 2 Reflect on other changes you have experienced.

What insights do they provide? Is it usual for you to take a while to settle? What helped you last time?

### 3 Slow things down a little.

What other changes are going on for you? Have you also moved location? Are you trying to settle children into a new school? Perhaps it may be easier to get the children settled into a new school, rent for a while, and then in six months look for a place to buy.

Slow down some of the other changes in your life too. Put a halt to the online learning for a few months. Start painting the bathroom in six months' time.

Also, slow some of the personal decisions you are making at work. For example, sort out the Health Insurance scheme next month; focus on learning one new IT system before the next; change banks in a few month's time.

### 4 Redouble your efforts to build relationships.

How are you tracking with your stakeholder interviews? Get moving on them.

Put more effort into building relationships with your team members. Invite them for a coffee; have lunch together; go for a walk in a break; talk to them about their family.

Join the social club and attend some events.

Take a mental note of the tone of the conversations you are having with work mates. What is the negative to positive ratio? Perhaps you are mixing with the wrong people – find more positive co-workers to spend time with.

### 5 Talk with family and friends about what you are feeling.

Share your concerns. They don't have to be resolved. Tell them you aren't looking for answers, you just want to talk about it. Often, simply speaking your concerns aloud brings a new flash of insight.

**6 Note the negativity bias.**

Psychologists have long known about negativity bias. We tend to focus on the negative, have more to say about things we don't like, and use more elaborate, detailed language to describe our negative experiences.

Challenge yourself and ask your family to help you to talk about the good things too. Spend just as much time describing these experiences. Make a list of what you like and don't like. Put a weighting on each. Are you over-weighting the one or two negatives at the expense of the positives? Remind yourself that no job is perfect.

You may find it helpful to write out three positives each day.

**7 Focus on learning.**

Reframe frustrations as learning opportunities. Seek out opportunities to learn from others and with others. We all feel better when we feel like we are learning. Reflect on what you have learned since you started. What do you know now that you didn't know before?

**8 Talk to your manager.**

Give yourself time, and if you continue to feel flat, talk to your manager. You may want to raise it informally at first; e.g., "it is taking me longer to settle than I thought." Or, "I am finding it harder than I imagined."

Give them the opportunity to work with you. Think about what is making you unhappy, and think about work-arounds. Offer suggestions.

**9 Take a break.**

Starting a new job is tiring! See if you can go away for a weekend – visit family or go camping. If you can't, build in fun leisure times – go to the movies, go for a long walk in the weekend, have people over for a BBQ, get a massage. Treat yourself! Have fun!

