

A man with a beard and glasses is talking on a mobile phone. He is looking out a window, and the background is a blurred outdoor scene. The man is wearing a dark sweater over a light blue collared shirt.

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Top 10 Priorities for New Sourcing & Procurement Leaders

**Focus on what matters most during the first 100 days
of a sourcing & procurement leadership transition**

Introduction

Leadership transitions can be challenging, but they also represent an opportunity for raising the profile of sourcing & procurement as a strategic business partner driving business innovation and results. The new sourcing & procurement leader must identify critical priorities of internal business partners and how these can be supported with the extended supply base.

Most organizations consider new leadership transitions as one-off events and take a “hands off” approach that requires new leaders to self-manage their moves. New-to-role leaders who navigate their transitions alone must simultaneously onboard themselves, establish a new vision for their function and quickly execute high-impact projects and changes. They face an overwhelming number of competing tasks during their first few months.

Getting sourcing & procurement leadership transitions right is critical. Maximize the new leader’s effectiveness and job satisfaction, and raise the strategic profile of sourcing & procurement, with a well-engineered transition framework. This report clarifies a new sourcing & procurement leader’s immediate priorities so they may move forward with confidence on assessing and building sourcing & procurement maturity, building stakeholder relationships, mitigating supplier risks and devising an action plan.

Top 10 Sourcing & Procurement Priorities

What should new sourcing & procurement leaders prioritize? The figure on the right lists the top 10 priorities of sourcing & procurement leaders in transition.



Sourcing & Procurement Leader Profiles and Transition Scenarios

The profile of a new sourcing & procurement leader and their transition scenario will generally dictate the urgency around these 10 priorities. The table to the right summarizes common leader profiles, and the table on the following page describes common transition scenarios.

Profile ↓	Description ↓
Veteran — external hire	The veteran hire has a good idea of what it takes to be successful in the job. Building stakeholder relationships and establishing their brand early on will accelerate impact. If they are from another industry, they will have to rapidly come up to speed with industry and relevant technology trends.
Interim — internal hire	An interim hire is concerned with keeping continuity and executing day-to-day operations. Much like the first-time hire, opportunities exist to develop business relationships and provide strategic vision.
First-time — internal hire	The first-time hire is concerned about executing day-to-day operations, managing costs, solving problems, and delivering programs on time and on budget. There are opportunities to build business relationships and provide strategic vision.
First-ever — internal/external hire	The first-ever sourcing & procurement leader focuses equally on ensuring day-to-day operations, providing strategic vision and building stakeholder relationships.
Consultant — external hire	The consultant hire may have prior knowledge of the organization. Building trust among stakeholders and staff are often a priority as they need to impress now more as a leader than as an expert.

Source: Gartner

Sourcing & Procurement Leader Profiles and Transition Scenarios (Continued)

Used together, the leader profiles and transition scenarios will shape sourcing & procurement strategy.

Transition Scenario ↓	Keys to Success ↓
Break New Ground: The leader assumes a newly created executive position.	Clearly define responsibilities and objectives, and understand the stakeholder ecosystem.
Jump-Start: The organization needs to move in a new direction quickly. Change agent role.	Quickly understand organizational and team contexts, and use networks and the team to socialize and drive change.
Follow a Train Wreck: The predecessor was not successful.	Create a clear vision, and strengthen relationships affected by underperformance.
Keep the Train Running Smoothly: The business focus is continuity.	Continue successful programs and operations while identifying opportunities to grow and transform the business.
Replace an Icon: The predecessor was very successful in the job.	Clarify the role and forge relationships to legitimize and advance the new agenda.

Source: Gartner

Support for leadership transitions

Are you a new sourcing & procurement leader? Are you onboarding a new sourcing & procurement leader? Gartner can help. We offer insights, advice, data and tools to help guide a successful leadership transition. Learn more at gartner.com/en/supply-chain/insights/supply-chain-leadership-transition.

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