

BTSD NEW LEADER

YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS AS AN ASM

KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT.

Your first 90 days aren't about proving you know everything.

They're about learning the business, building trust with your leaders, and getting comfortable running a store through other people instead of doing the work yourself.

You don't have to figure it all out at once. This playbook is here to help you focus on what matters next.

START HERE

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

This isn't a test and it isn't a checklist you race through. It's a guide you work through at the speed your first 90 days actually move.

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW

- ☐ **Don't try to do it all at once.** Focus on the phase you're in right now. The rest will still be here when you get there.
- ☐ **Use the questions with your manager.** Some of the best pages here are the ones you work through together, not alone.
- ☐ **Write things down.** The first 90 days go fast. What you write now is what you'll actually remember later.
- ☐ **Go back and reread.** Something that didn't land in week one often makes complete sense in week six.
- ☐ **Be honest in the reflections.** Nobody is grading this. The only person who loses when you write the "right" answer instead of the real one is you.

YOUR DETAILS

MY START DATE

MY MANAGER

MY DAY 90 DATE

MY STORE

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING...

"I feel like everyone expects me to already know how to run a store."

Nobody hands you a store and expects you to have it figured out in week one. Your first job isn't to prove you deserved the promotion — it's to learn the business, understand your leaders, and establish how you want to lead. The people who promoted you knew exactly what you did and didn't know yet.

THE MAP

THE 90-DAY JOURNEY

Four phases. Each one has a different job. You don't skip ahead, and you don't need to — every phase sets up the one after it.

DAYS

1-7

THE TRANSITION

Learn before you change. Find out what you actually own, meet your leaders, and resist fixing things you don't understand yet.

DAYS

8-30

BUILD YOUR FOUNDATION

Establish how you lead. Set expectations with your supervisors, learn the numbers, and build credibility through consistency.

DAYS

31-60

TAKE OWNERSHIP

Stop waiting to be told what to own. Make real decisions, delegate through your leaders, and own business results.

DAYS

61-90

LEAD WITH INTENT

Lead with purpose, not position. Develop your supervisors, handle the hard conversations, and think past today's shift.

REMEMBER

These phases blend into each other. You won't wake up on Day 31 as a different leader. What changes is where you put your attention — and what your store should be able to count on from you.

PHASE 1 · DAYS 1-7

THE TRANSITION

YOUR JOB RIGHT NOW

LEARN BEFORE YOU CHANGE.

Most new ASMs get a title and a vague sense of what they're responsible for. The gap between what you think you own and what your GM thinks you own is where the first month goes wrong. Close that gap this week.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Clarifying what you own
- Learning the whole store
- The informal power structure
- Meeting your supervisors
- Observing before changing
- How your GM defines success

YOUR MOVES

- ☐ Ask your GM directly: ***"What do I own now that I didn't own before?"*** Write the answer down.
- ☐ Then ask the harder one: ***"What do you expect me to own without being asked?"***
- ☐ Sit down with each supervisor who now reports to you — even ten minutes each.
- ☐ Walk the entire store, not just your old area. Write down three things you'd never noticed before.
- ☐ Notice who people actually go to when something needs solving. That's the real structure.
- ☐ Change nothing this week. Just watch.

WATCH OUT FOR THIS

RUNNING YOUR OLD JOB WITH A NEW TITLE

Why it happensYour old job is the one you're good at. When a shift gets busy, you drift back to what's familiar — covering a register, fixing a floor set, jumping into your old department.

What to do insteadYour scope is now the whole store, not one piece of it. Every hour you spend doing a supervisor's job is an hour nobody is doing yours. Notice the drift and step back out.

WEEK ONE REFLECTION

THINK IT THROUGH

WHAT DO I ACTUALLY OWN NOW — IN MY GM'S WORDS, NOT MINE?

WHAT DID I SEE WALKING THE WHOLE STORE THAT I'D NEVER NOTICED?

WHICH OF MY SUPERVISORS DO I NEED TO UNDERSTAND BETTER?

WHAT DO I WANT TO CHANGE LATER — BUT NOT YET?

PHASE 2 • DAYS 8-30

BUILD YOUR FOUNDATION

YOUR JOB RIGHT NOW

ESTABLISH HOW YOU LEAD.

Your supervisors are currently guessing how you'll operate. Every day you leave that unanswered, they fill the gap with assumptions — usually based on whoever had your job last. Answer it, then learn the numbers well enough to lead with them.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Communication rhythm
- Setting expectations
- Coaching supervisors
- Comp, conversion, payroll
- Delegating through leaders
- Follow-up
- Accountability
- Building credibility

YOUR MOVES

- ☐ Finish a real 1:1 with every supervisor — not a hallway check-in.
- ☐ Tell your team when you're available and how you want to hear about problems.
- ☐ Sit with your GM and walk through comp, conversion, payroll and traffic until you actually understand them.
- ☐ Identify the one metric you understand least — go learn it from whoever knows it best.
- ☐ Pick one or two standards that matter and hold them the same way for everyone.
- ☐ Give one supervisor specific coaching — not "good job," but what exactly to do differently.
- ☐ Ask your GM for feedback before they have to offer it.

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING...

"I used to be their peer. Now it's awkward and nobody's saying anything."

It's awkward because it changed and nobody named it. The fix isn't to act differently — it's to say it out loud once, then be consistent. Most of the weirdness comes from everyone guessing at the new rules instead of someone stating them. Have the short, honest conversation and then let your day-to-day leadership do the rest.

WATCH OUT FOR THIS

GOING AROUND YOUR SUPERVISORS TO GET THINGS DONE

Why it happensIt's faster. You know the associate, you know the task, and asking the supervisor to handle it adds a step.

What to do insteadEvery time you skip past a supervisor, you teach them they aren't really running their area — and you teach their team to come to you instead. Hand it to the supervisor, even when it's slower.

PHASE 2 REFLECTION

THINK IT THROUGH

WHAT HAVE I HANDED TO A SUPERVISOR — AND DID I LET THEM DO IT THEIR WAY?

WHAT EXPECTATION HAVE I SET CLEARLY? HOW DO I KNOW IT LANDED?

WHERE AM I STILL DOING WORK THAT BELONGS TO A SUPERVISOR?

WHICH NUMBER DO I STILL NOT UNDERSTAND WELL ENOUGH?

DAY 30 CHECK-IN

YOU'RE ONE-THIRD OF THE WAY THERE.

The first 30 days were about understanding — your scope, your leaders, how this store actually runs. The next 30 are about acting on what you've learned.

WHAT DO I UNDERSTAND NOW THAT I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND ON DAY 1?

WHICH SUPERVISOR HAVE I BUILT THE STRONGEST RELATIONSHIP WITH?

WHERE AM I STILL UNCERTAIN?

WHAT IS ONE THING I NEED TO OWN MORE?

THE NEXT 30 DAYS

TAKE OWNERSHIP

Stop waiting to be told what's yours.

PHASE 3 • DAYS 31-60

TAKE OWNERSHIP

YOUR JOB RIGHT NOW

STOP WAITING TO BE TOLD WHAT TO OWN.

By now you know enough to act. The gap between an ASM who's still new and one who's actually helping run the store is almost always this: one waits to be handed things, the other picks them up.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Owning business results
- Delegating outcomes
- Business acumen
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Holding leaders accountable
- Coaching supervisors
- Follow-through

YOUR MOVES

- ☐ Pick one business result — a metric, a category, an outcome — and take real ownership of moving it.
- ☐ Bring your GM a plan for it, not just an update.
- ☐ Hand a supervisor an *outcome*, not a method. Check in at a set point instead of hovering.
- ☐ Have your first real accountability conversation with a leader, not just an associate.
- ☐ Make one decision you'd normally run past your GM first. Then tell them what you did and why.
- ☐ If a result is behind, say so directly and say what you're changing.

WATCH OUT FOR THIS

WAITING FOR PERMISSION ON EVERYTHING

Why it happens Checking with your GM first feels safe and responsible. Nobody gets in trouble for asking. But past a certain point it stops reading as careful and starts reading as not ready for the role.

What to do instead There's a difference between *asking for direction* and *avoiding ownership*. Here's the test: if you'd be comfortable explaining the decision afterward, you were comfortable making it. Make it – then tell your manager what you did and why.

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING...

"I'm working more hours than I did before and getting less done."

That's the signal you're still working like a supervisor in an ASM's job. The hours problem isn't a time-management problem – it's a delegation problem. You're doing work that belongs to someone else because it's faster than teaching it. It's faster today and slower every day after.

PHASE 3 REFLECTION

THINK IT THROUGH

WHAT AM I NOW COMFORTABLE OWNING THAT I WASN'T READY TO OWN ON DAY 1?

WHAT DECISION DID I MAKE WITHOUT CHECKING FIRST? HOW DID IT GO?

WHERE AM I STILL ASKING MY GM FOR PERMISSION I DON'T NEED?

DAY 60 CHECK-IN

YOU'RE STARTING TO OWN THE ROLE.

Somewhere in the last month you stopped asking what to do and started deciding. That shift is the actual promotion — the title was just paperwork.

WHAT AM I NOW COMFORTABLE OWNING?

WHAT CONVERSATION HAVE I GOTTEN BETTER AT?

WHICH SUPERVISOR AM I ACTIVELY DEVELOPING?

WHERE DO I STILL NEED TO GROW?

THE NEXT 30 DAYS

LEAD WITH INTENT

Lead with purpose, not position.

PHASE 4 • DAYS 61-90

LEAD WITH INTENT

YOUR JOB RIGHT NOW

LEAD WITH PURPOSE — NOT JUST POSITION.

The last stretch isn't about doing more. It's about leading on purpose — building the leaders under you, handling the hard things, and thinking past the shift you're standing in.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

- Leading independently
- Business ownership
- Managing up
- Anticipating problems
- Developing your supervisors
- Difficult conversations
- Building trust
- Becoming someone people rely on

YOUR MOVES

- ☐ Pick one supervisor to actively develop — give them a real stretch assignment, not praise.
- ☐ Have the conversation you've been avoiding. It won't get easier.
- ☐ Identify a recurring problem in the store and build a real fix, not a workaround.
- ☐ Raise one issue to your GM with your own recommendation attached.
- ☐ Ask your GM: *"What's one thing I need to get better at before I'm ready for my next step?"*
- ☐ Ask one supervisor what you could do better. Then listen without defending.

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING...

"I still check with my GM on things I probably don't need to."

Checking upward feels responsible. Past a certain point it reads as not ready. The test is simple: if you'd be comfortable explaining the decision afterward, you were comfortable making it. Make it, then tell them what you did.

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING...

"I don't feel that different than I did on Day 1."

You probably are, and you can't see it because it happened gradually. Go back to what you wrote in week one. The things that felt impossible then are things you did last week without noticing. Growth in this job is almost never visible from the inside.

PHASE 4 REFLECTION

THINK IT THROUGH

WHICH SUPERVISOR AM I DEVELOPING, AND WHAT AM I ACTUALLY DOING ABOUT IT?

WHAT CONVERSATION DID I STOP AVOIDING? WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT KIND OF LEADER DO I WANT TO BE KNOWN AS?

REUSABLE PAGE • MAKE COPIES

WEEKLY CHECK-IN

Use this every week. Ten minutes at the end of a shift is enough. This page is where the 90 days actually stick.

WEEK #

I'M ON DAY _____ OF 90

THIS WEEK I'M FOCUSED ON:

MY 3 MOVES THIS WEEK☐

☐

☐

WHAT DID I LEARN?

WHAT CHALLENGED ME?

WHERE DO I NEED HELP?

WHAT WILL I DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT WEEK?

TAKE THESE WITH YOU

MY CONVERSATIONS

Most of this job happens in conversations. These are the two that matter most in your first 90 days — one with your supervisors, one with your GM.

FIRST 1:1 WITH A SUPERVISOR

"What do you need from me as your leader?"

"What's working well in your area right now?"

"What's getting in your way?"

"What's been broken for a while that nobody's fixed?"

"What would you change if you were in my role?"

Ask more than you answer. Write down one thing per supervisor you can actually act on — then act on it within two weeks. That's what makes the second conversation honest.

MEETING WITH MY GM

"What does great look like for me in this role in 90 days?"

"What do you expect me to own without being asked?"

"What should I come to you for — and what should I just decide?"

"What's the mistake new ASMs usually make here?"

"How do you want to hear bad news from me?"

Ask the third and fifth questions early. Knowing where your authority ends — and how your GM wants bad news — saves you a month of guessing.

COMMON NEW ASM TRAPS

WATCH OUT FOR THIS

Every new ASM hits at least a few of these. Knowing them ahead of time doesn't make you immune — it just means you'll recognize it faster when it happens.

1 • TRYING TO PROVE YOURSELF

WHAT HAPPENS

You push hard to show you deserved the promotion.

WHY

You think the title has to be justified daily.

INSTEAD

You already got the job. Spend that energy learning it, not defending it.

2 • DOING YOUR SUPERVISORS' JOBS FOR THEM

WHAT HAPPENS

You take on their work because it's faster than coaching them through it.

WHY

It's familiar, and it feels productive.

INSTEAD

It's faster today and slower every day after. Teach it once, get the hours back forever.

3 • AVOIDING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

WHAT HAPPENS

Something small slides, then slides again, then becomes a real problem.

WHY

You're new and don't want to damage a relationship.

INSTEAD

Small and early. The conversation never gets easier by waiting.

4 • TREATING EVERYONE THE SAME INSTEAD OF FAIRLY

WHAT HAPPENS

You apply an identical approach to very different people.

WHY

Same feels safe and defensible.

INSTEAD

Hold the same *standard* for everyone. How you coach toward it should differ by person.

5 • WAITING FOR YOUR GM'S PERMISSION**WHAT HAPPENS**

You run decisions past your GM that are already yours to make.

WHY

Checking first feels responsible and low-risk.

INSTEAD

If you'd be comfortable explaining it afterward, just decide it.

6 • OVERCORRECTING TOO QUICKLY**WHAT HAPPENS**

You change several things in your first few weeks.

WHY

You see problems clearly and want to show initiative.

INSTEAD

Find out why it's that way first. You may learn something — or you may earn the right to change it.

7 • TALKING MORE THAN LISTENING**WHAT HAPPENS**

You fill silences with direction and updates.

WHY

Talking feels like leading. Silence feels like a gap.

INSTEAD

In a 1:1, aim to talk less than half the time. You already know what you think.

8 • FORGETTING THE PEER RELATIONSHIP CHANGED**WHAT HAPPENS**

You stay in peer mode with supervisors you now lead — or swing too far the other way and go cold.

WHY

Nobody named the change out loud, so everyone's guessing.

INSTEAD

Say it once, honestly: things are different now, and you still respect them. Then be consistent.

9 • STAYING IN YOUR OLD LANE**WHAT HAPPENS**

You keep your attention on the department you came from and leave the rest of the store alone.

WHY

It's what you know, and it's where you feel competent.

INSTEAD

You were promoted to see the whole store. Start noticing things outside your old area and raising them — that's the job now.

10 • NOT ASKING FOR FEEDBACK**WHAT HAPPENS**

You find out in a review what you could have known in week three.

WHY

Asking feels like admitting you're unsure.

INSTEAD

Nobody volunteers feedback to a new ASM. Ask specifically: "What's one thing I should do differently?"

YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING...

"I don't want my old team to think I've changed."

You may have changed roles, but you don't have to change who you are. What changes is what you're responsible for — and being honest about that with the people you used to work beside is what keeps the relationship intact. Pretending nothing changed is what makes it weird.

DAY 90

YOU MADE IT THROUGH YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS.

Don't treat this like a checklist you finished. Treat it like a place to stop and look back honestly — because what you learned here is what you'll carry into everything after it.

WHAT CHANGED?

WHAT DID I LEARN ABOUT MYSELF?

WHAT DID I LEARN ABOUT LEADERSHIP?

WHAT WOULD I DO DIFFERENTLY IF I STARTED OVER?

WHAT KIND OF LEADER AM I BECOMING?

WHO HELPED ME ALONG THE WAY — AND HAVE I TOLD THEM?

DAY 90 AND BEYOND

WHAT'S NEXT?

**YOU DON'T FINISH BECOMING A LEADER ON DAY 90.
YOU JUST STOP BEING NEW.**

The structure of these 90 days ends here. The habits don't — and the habits are the part that actually mattered. Decide now which ones you're keeping.

WHAT I'M KEEPING

- ☐ My 1:1 rhythm with my supervisors
- ☐ The standard I decided to hold
- ☐ Delegating outcomes instead of absorbing work
- ☐ Asking for feedback before it's offered
- ☐ Following up on what I said I'd do

MY BIGGEST REMAINING GAP — THE THING I KNOW I STILL AVOID:

MY ONE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY FOR THE NEXT 90 DAYS:

ONE LEADER I'M GOING TO DEVELOP NEXT:

**YOU DON'T NEED
TO HAVE IT ALL
FIGURED OUT.**

KEEP LEARNING.

KEEP ASKING QUESTIONS.

KEEP HAVING THE CONVERSATIONS.

KEEP DEVELOPING YOUR PEOPLE.

KEEP TAKING OWNERSHIP.

YOUR TITLE MAY HAVE CHANGED.

**NOW IT'S TIME
TO GROW INTO IT.**



BTSD

BEHIND THE STORE DOORS