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## Outgoing CEOs on the Board: Helpful Guide or Confusing Presence?

*Dr. Joseph L. McGill and RHR International Shed Light on the Role of the Predecessor*

CHICAGO -- ([BUSINESS WIRE](#)) -- There is no denying that the lingering shadow of the predecessor affects every freshly appointed CEO. In some cases, this is a legacy left behind by a beloved founder. In others it is the very real presence of a former leader who has left the office, but not the building. To be successful, the new Chief Executive must make it crystal clear to all stakeholders as to who is leading the organization.

In part two of a three part *Executive Insight* series on CEO Transitions, RHR International addresses the role of the outgoing CEO, who has a significant part to play in the overall success of the management changeover. Their presence, however, can have positive or negative ramifications.

“According to our new research, sitting Chief Executives’ perceptions of whether the previous officeholders were helpful or not during their transition into the role were almost evenly split,” said Dr. Juleen Veneziano, RHR International’s Research Consultant and leader of the study.

A findings summary soon to be published by RHR International indicates that 50% of previous CEOs stay involved with the company as a member of the board. On average, those who stayed as a director did so for eight months – three quarters of the first critical year of the transition process.

“Whether the prior CEO leaves immediately or remains on the board, the best practice is to literally and symbolically ‘let go’ at the changeover – providing the new Chief Executive with the freedom and autonomy to lead as the singular source of authority,” said Dr. Joseph L. McGill, a Partner with RHR International and an expert on the topic of CEO Transitions. “However,” he added, “this does not always happen.”

To learn more about the pros and cons of former CEOs on the board, download and read the complete issue, entitled “[CEO Transitions II: The Role of the Predecessor](#).” Part one of the series, “[CEO Transitions I: Alignment & Support](#)” focused on the role of the organization, board and the senior team. The final issue will provide steps that new Chief Executives can take personally to help themselves through the transition period.

### ABOUT RHR INTERNATIONAL

We are a firm of management psychologists and consultants who work closely with top management to accelerate individual, team and business performance. We focus on five key areas of client need — Executive Selection and Integration, Accelerated Executive Effectiveness, Senior Team Effectiveness, Management Due Diligence and CEO Succession. We have been proven difference-makers for more than 65 years, unique in our combination of top management focus, psychologists’ perspective and high-level business acumen.

RHR International has offices in Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States. The company is headquartered in Chicago, Ill. For more information, please visit [www.rhrinternational.com](http://www.rhrinternational.com), <http://tinyurl.com/rhrblogsite> and <https://twitter.com/RHRIntlLLP>.

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