Transition, Transition, Transition

As 2018 comes to a close and 2019 is beginning, I am definitely feeling transition all around me! Taking a new job as the Director of Enterprise Internal Controls for Minnesota Management and Budget is a humbling change. But now that I am in a less familiar setting, many of my operating internal controls have gone away. Which way do I turn to get to my office? Where is the copy machine? What is my new phone number? What is my new login ID for my computer? Anything I took for granted or had memorized is now different and requires me to stop and think. It’s no longer automatic.

As many of you begin to experience leadership transitions in your organizations, you may find some familiar operations are also changing. Who are your new leaders? Do they have new ideas and initiatives that you need to incorporate into your daily work? Are there organizational changes that need to be absorbed and adopted?

Other, daily changes also occur. With our “silver tsunami” of longtime state employees retiring and job opportunities in abundance, there is no guarantee that people who have a lot of knowledge about processes and procedures are going to be around to teach other employees how to do things. When people change positions or leave, the level of knowledge transfer can vary, creating internal control weaknesses and gaps. Tasks that used to happen (seemingly) automatically may not happen or may now take longer while people are learning new roles and responsibilities.

Here are some basic actions everyone can take to ensure internal controls remain in place when changes happen:

- Renew and verify delegations of authority within your organization.
- Ensure there are documented processes and procedures in place for all key business processes.
- Identify key internal controls within procedures and make it clear why they are there. Don’t get rid of key internal controls in times of change.
- Discuss risk assessment work with new leaders. This is an excellent time for them to become informed about what the organization is responsible for and what areas might require improvement.
- Ensure new leaders understand and promote fraud prevention and reporting processes in your organization.

Transition is a time of uncertainty but it is also an exciting time. Do your part to make sure strong internal controls are the foundation upon which change is built in your organization.

Questions?
Contact Amy Jorgenson, Director of Enterprise Internal Controls