

Congratulations! You're the new SharePoint Administrator

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When the role of the administrative professional is augmented with new duties, it can be a good news/bad news situation. On the one hand, if we don't grow in our skills and abilities, we become less valuable to our organization. So, accepting new roles, like SharePoint Administrator, is a good thing. On the other hand, if we are already stretched thin, we need to make sure that we can perform these new roles optimally, in the least amount of time, with the greatest amount of positive impact on our organization.



That all sounds good. However, if you're sitting there, thinking, "But I don't know the first thing about being a SharePoint Administrator!" then here is a little help. You need three things to be in place to be an effective SharePoint Administrator:

Governance

SharePoint environments have a tendency to be ineffective in one of two ways. Either they are unwieldy because no one has put any guidelines in place for site structure, format and content, or they are so rigid in structure, format and content that they really don't serve the end user. In the latter case, it also probably means that engagement is nearly nil. A proper balance must be struck in order for SharePoint to remain manageable. The decisions must include people like you, the site administrator, to ensure that boundaries are tight enough to prevent a runaway and difficult-to-control site, as well as flexible enough to allow you to provide meaningful content and functionality to your team.

Site Objectives

Site owners should be very clear about what the team needs their site to do. Here are some good questions to ask:

1. What makes my phone ring or email inbox fill up? Can information requests be placed in SharePoint and made accessible to people outside of my area who need our help?
2. For what are we always waiting on one another? Can we implement things like discussion boards, announcements and document review processes to counter the time that's wasted waiting?
3. Is there content that requires generally different permission levels? Internal to the team? External to the team? External to the organization? Should individual lists and libraries have their own security levels, or should this be afforded on different sites/subsites?

Proper Training

SharePoint site administration is not necessarily rocket science at a team or departmental subsite level. However, to attempt this role without any proper training is dangerous. If you are given Designer or Owner access to your site, you can inadvertently delete important content and structures. SharePoint is great about retaining things in a recycle bin, but that's no way to manage change! You should understand the following topic areas:

- List and Library Creation
- Permissions and Groups
- Page Design
- Workflows

Editor's Note: Melissa is the moderator of Admin Pro Forum 2016, June 15-17 in Orlando, Fla. To learn more about using SharePoint and other Microsoft programs, please join us for this exciting event. For further information on Admin Pro Forum, please visit www.AdminProForum.com.

Melissa Esquibel is a frequent conference and webinar presenter and mainstay for the ASAP APC, IAAP-TEC and other administrative professional symposiums. She is a Microsoft® Certified Trainer and Microsoft Office Specialist Master, and conducts training sessions for clients nationwide. In her sessions at Admin Pro Forum, you'll laugh while you learn, but most of all you'll go back to the job armed with timesaving, effort-saving and frustration reducing tools.