3215 No Skipped Rungs

People Fieldbook · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/3215-no-skipped-rungs-2/

The Demand

Before your next promotion, you confirm the candidate has actually held the rung below the one you are about to give them. If you promote on potential and skip the rung, you are gambling with the operation and the person, and the role will arrive before the capability does — it will never catch up on its own.

The Work

1. Audit your bench for the next open lead or trainer seat. List every candidate under consideration.
2. For each candidate, confirm they have actually held the rung directly below the open seat — not adjacent experience, the actual rung.
3. Eliminate any candidate being considered purely on potential, without the rung held and mastered. Potential is not a substitute for the load-bearing floor below.
4. If your bench has no one who has held the rung below, that is not a hiring gap — it is a Training Ladder gap. Fix the ladder before you fill the seat.
5. Document which rung each of your current leads and trainers actually held before their promotion. If any were skipped, name it and build a retroactive development plan to backfill the missing rung.

Before you fill your next open seat, you confirm no rung was skipped, and if one was, you name it and start the backfill this week.