3670 The CoverShift Problem

People Fieldbook · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/3670-the-covershift-problem-2/

The Demand

The next time a lead is off and you cover their shift, you run it exactly the way they run it — not your version, not an improved version — because every deviation the cast sees becomes ammunition the lead has to fight through on their next shift, and you will have undermined the leadership layer you built.

The Work

1. Before you cover any shift this week, sit with the lead and write down their exact standard for that shift: prep order, flow, sequence, the specifics. Do not rely on memory from when you ran it yourself.
2. During the cover shift, run the lead's system verbatim. If you catch yourself defaulting to your old way, stop and correct to their standard in the moment.
3. Say nothing critical about how the lead runs their domain in front of the cast — not during the cover shift, not after. If you have a concern, take it to the lead directly, privately.
4. After the shift, debrief with the lead: what did you run the same, what did you get wrong, what do you need to know better before the next cover shift.
5. Audit your last month of cover shifts against these three failure modes: your version was worse, you ran it your way and the cast noticed, you criticized the lead's method in front of the cast. Name which one you are most guilty of.

This week, treat every cover shift as an exercise in running someone else's system exactly, not an opportunity to run your own.