

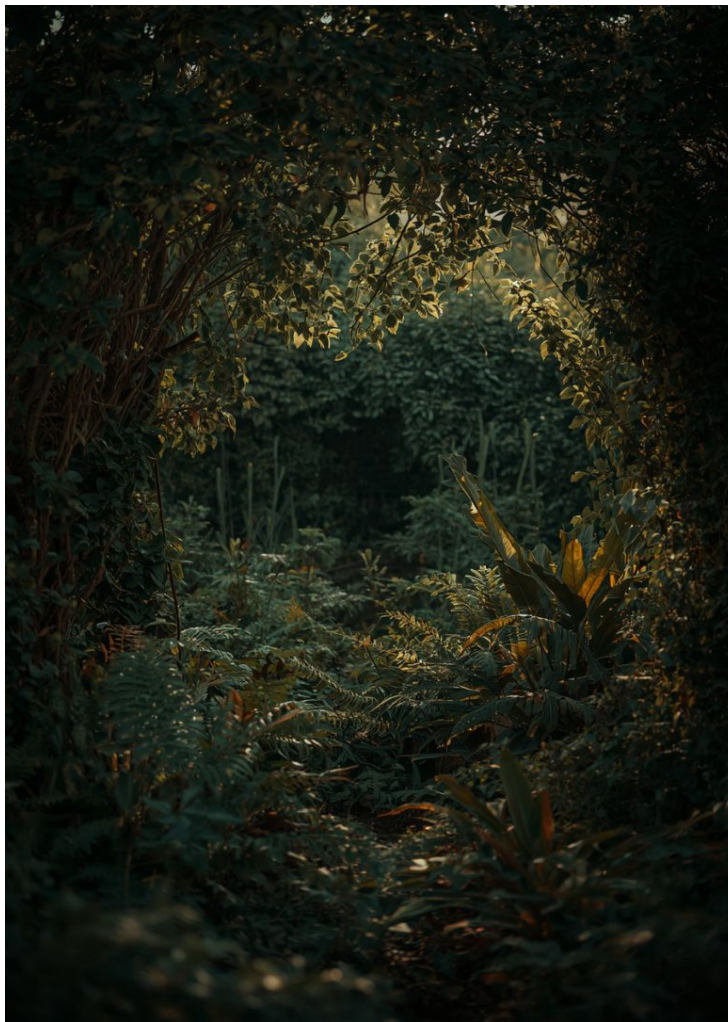


10 Things Your Employees Wish You Knew About Leadership

An employee-centered look at what really shapes culture, performance, and retention

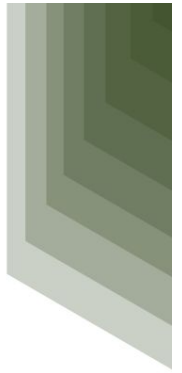
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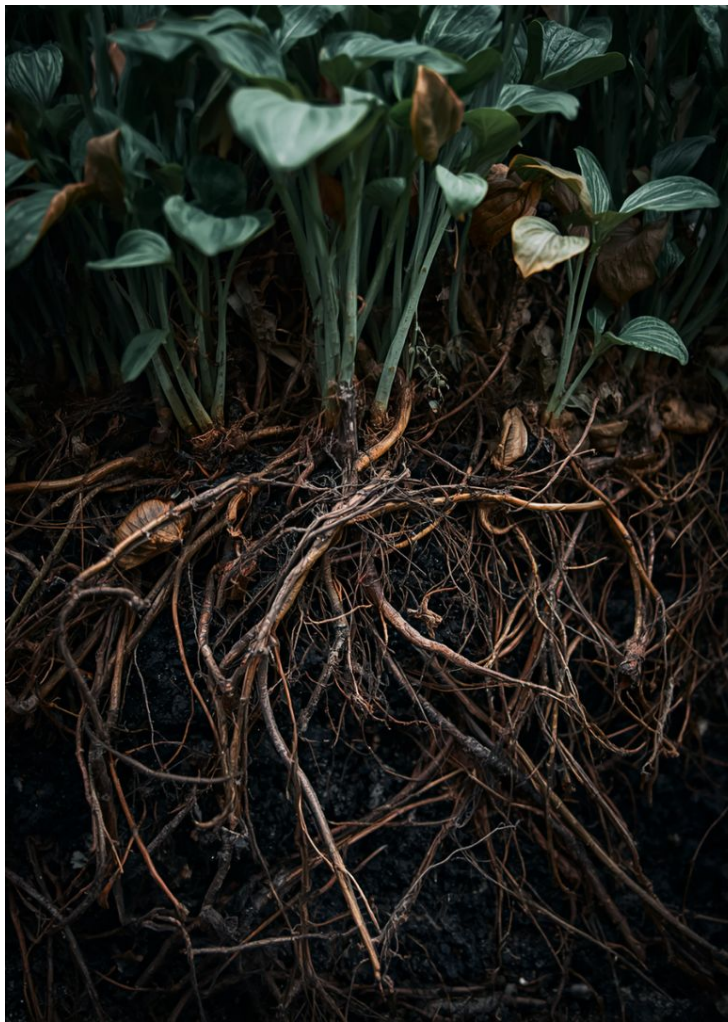




Leadership Is Loud— Even When You're Silent

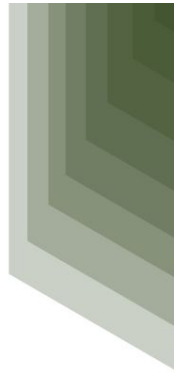
Leadership is not just what you say. It is what you **allow**, what you **avoid**, and what you tolerate.





What Employees Often Quit

Reflection prompt: If your team could say anything right now — without fear of consequences — what would they really want you to hear? What tension has gone unaddressed? What confusion has been quietly accepted as normal?





How We'll Look at Each Leadership Gap

What Employees Experience

We examine each gap through the lens of the employee — what they feel, observe, and carry when leadership falls short.

Why It Creates Obstacles to Success

Unaddressed gaps don't stay neutral. They erode trust, increase anxiety, and quietly reshape your culture — often before leaders notice.

What Good Leadership Looks Like

Each section closes with a practical leadership shift — a concrete move from reactive to intentional. Diagnose the soil, not just the wilted leaf.





1. We Want to Know What's Expected—Clearly

When expectations are fuzzy, anxiety increases. Performance becomes subjective. Resentment grows quietly—not because people don't care, but because they genuinely don't know what success looks like or how they'll be measured.



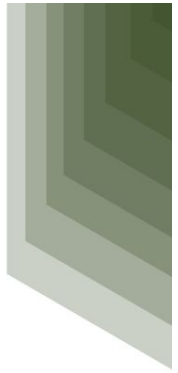
Leadership Shift

Clarity beats charisma. Define what success looks like.
Revisit expectations often. Eliminate guessing games.
When people know exactly where the rows are, they grow
in the right direction—and they thrive.



2. When No One's Accountable, We Carry the Weight

When accountability is absent, good employees feel punished for caring. Mediocrity feels protected. High performers quietly absorb the slack — and the resentment. Trust erodes, not with a dramatic moment, but through dozens of small signals that nothing will change.





Leadership Shift

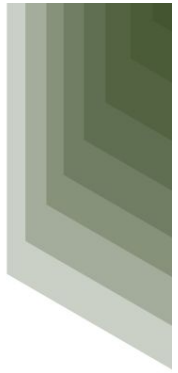
Accountability is not punishment — it is kindness. Pruning protects healthy growth. **What you tolerate teaches culture far louder than what you say you value.** Holding standards is how you protect your best people.





3. Please Put the Right People in the Right Seats

High performers quietly cover for misalignment—carrying extra weight that was never theirs to carry. Promotions begin to feel political rather than earned. Burnout sets in slowly, invisibly, until your best people are already halfway out the door.





Leadership Shift

Talent misplacement is leadership neglect. Skills do not automatically equal role fit. **The right person in the wrong seat will struggle**—not because they lack ability, but because the conditions don't match their strengths.



Right plant. Right soil. Right light.



4. We Need Decisions to Actually Get Made

When decisions stall, everything stalls. Meetings multiply. People lose momentum. And drama quietly fills the vacuum left by a lack of direction. Teams begin managing uncertainty instead of doing their best work — and the cost compounds daily.

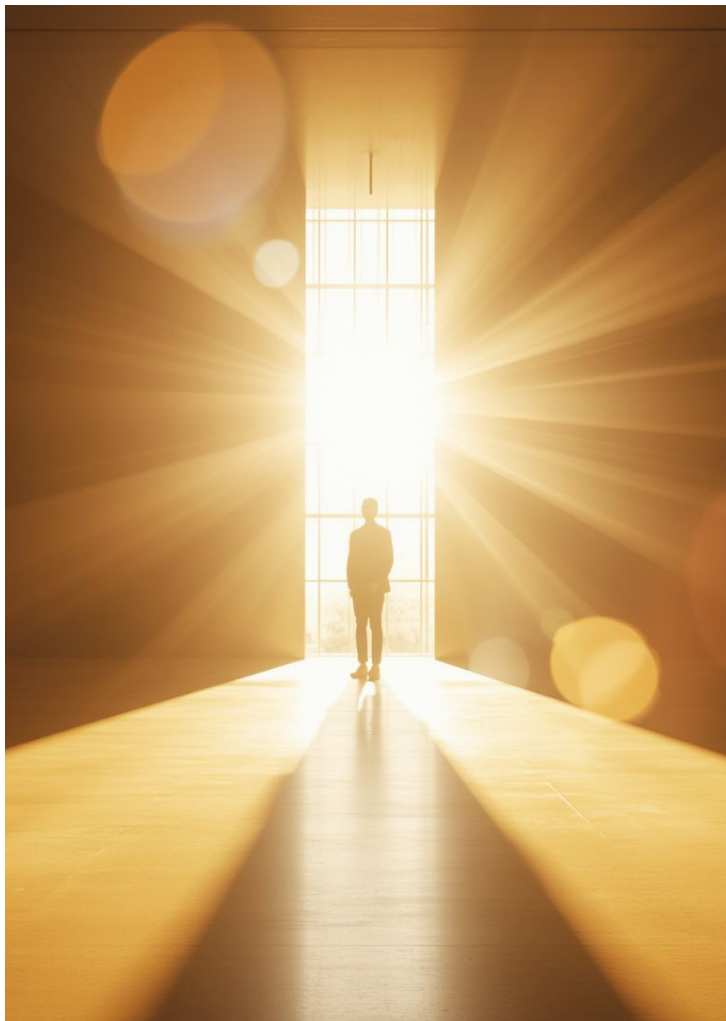




Leadership Shift

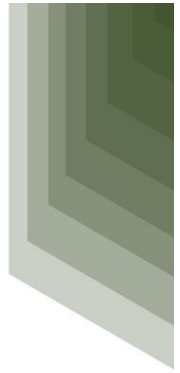


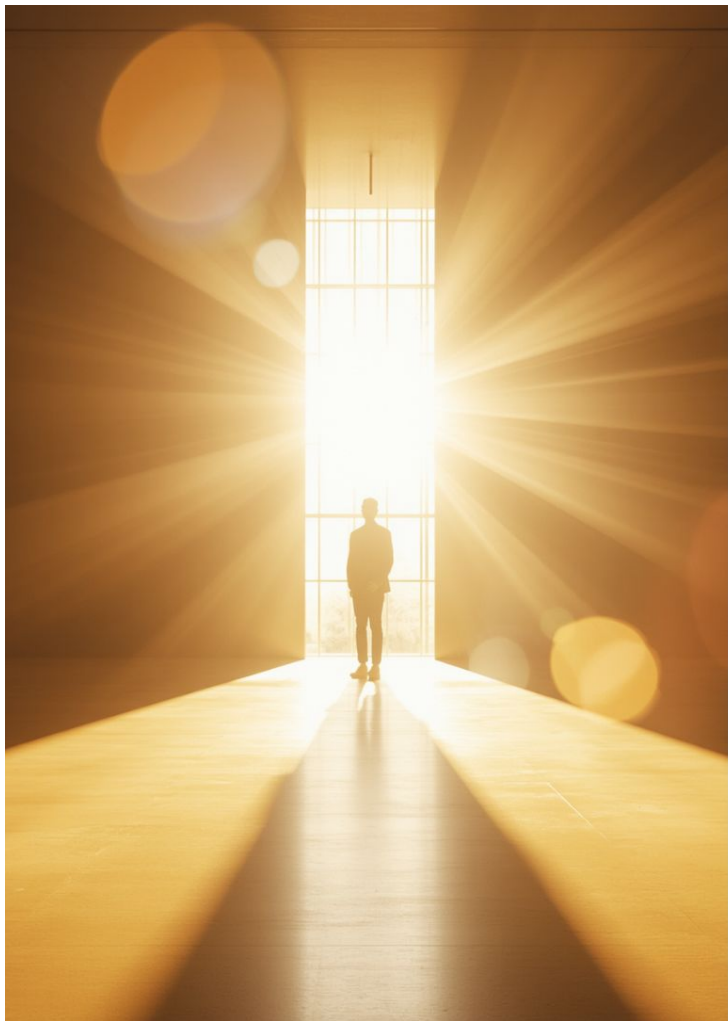
Indecision is a decision — and it teaches your team that nothing is urgent. **Create visible ownership and clear timelines.** Install the trellis before the vines sprawl. Choose the path through the garden. When leaders decide with intention, teams move with confidence.



5. Tell Us the Truth— Even When It's Uncomfortable

People read silence as dishonesty. When leaders go quiet, rumors fill the vacuum—and the story employees create is almost always worse than the truth. Emotional safety disappears when people feel they are being managed rather than trusted.

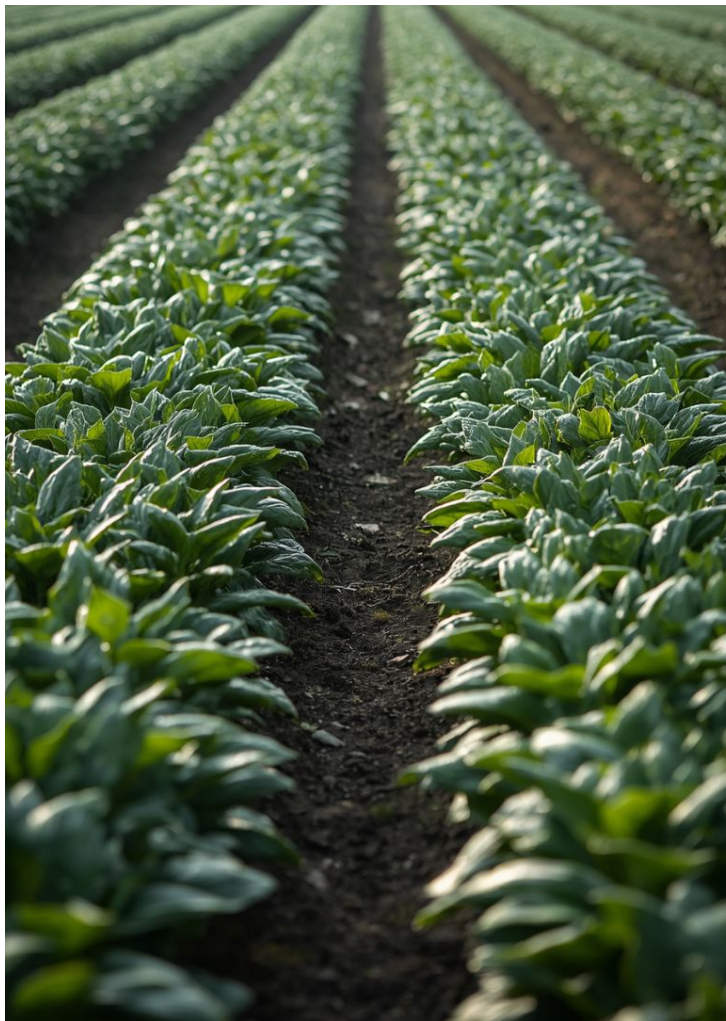




Leadership Shift

Transparency builds trust faster than perfection. You do not need all the answers—you need the honesty to say what you know, what you don't, and what comes next. Sunlight does not just illuminate; it enables growth. So does the truth.





6. Consistency Matters More Than Intensity



Leadership moods dictate team outcomes. When leaders are unpredictable, people burn out trying to read the room. Employees spend energy managing up instead of doing their best work. Unpredictability is its own kind of pressure — constant, invisible, and exhausting.



Leadership Shift



Be steady, not spiky. Consistent leadership creates psychological safety. **Your team doesn't need you to be perfect — they need to know what to expect from you.** Steady watering grows stronger roots than occasional flooding ever will.



7. We Want Feedback Before We Fail—Not After

When feedback only arrives after something goes wrong, fear replaces growth. Corrections feel personal, not developmental. People stop taking risks, stop trying new approaches, and quietly disengage. The silence before failure is not safety — it is neglect.





Leadership Shift

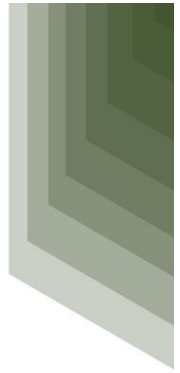
Coaching is better than critiquing. Regular tending beats emergency rescue. **Build a rhythm of honest, early, forward-looking feedback** — so your people grow with confidence, not in fear of the next correction.





8. Don't Confuse Being Busy with Being Effective

When leaders are always firefighting, strategy disappears. There is no time to improve systems, build capacity, or think ahead. Leaders look deeply "in it" — but never "above it." The team mirrors the chaos, and busyness becomes a substitute for progress.



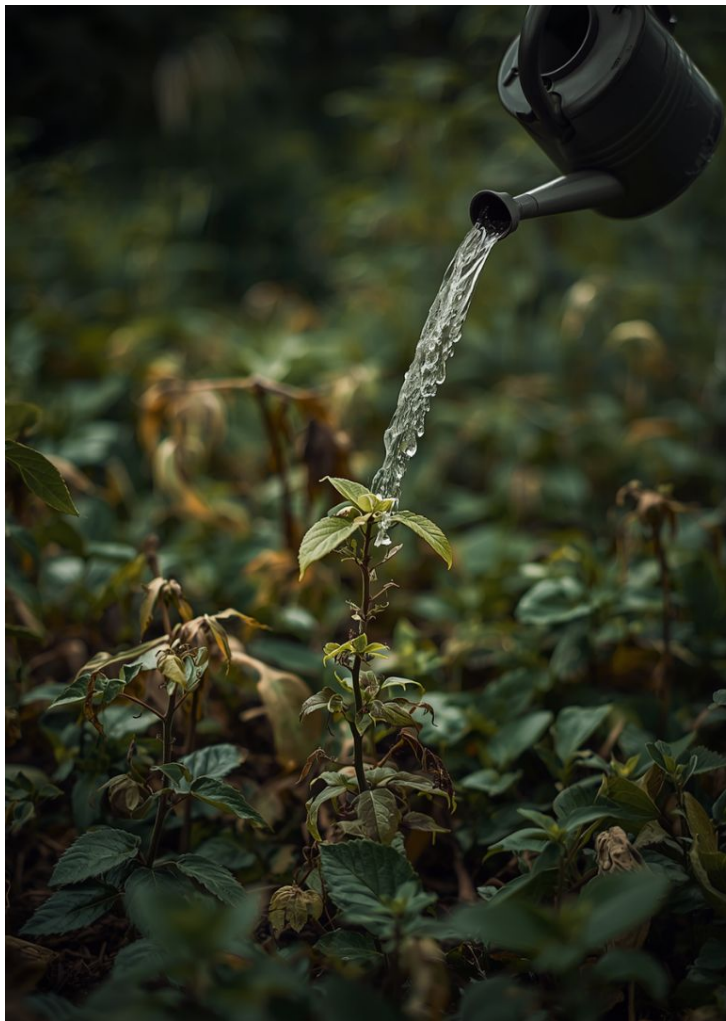


Leadership Shift

Leaders design environments — they don't just survive them. Step back to see the whole garden plan. **The most effective leaders create the conditions for others to thrive,** rather than staying perpetually reactive.

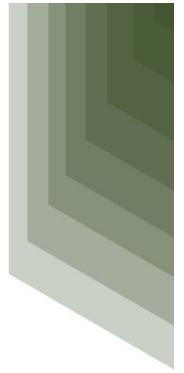


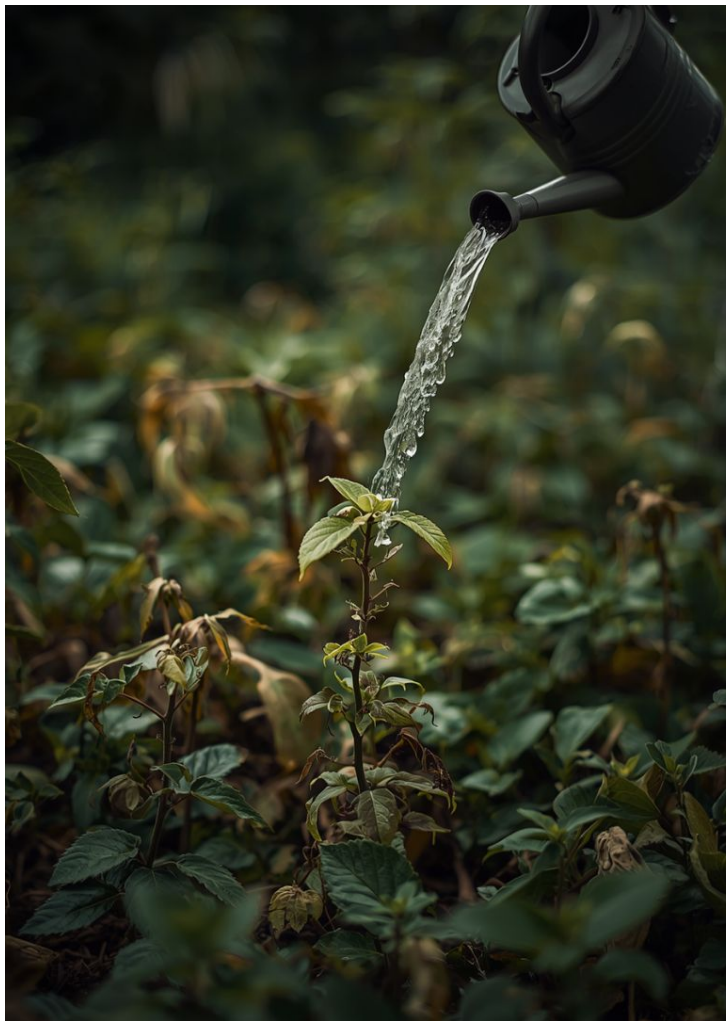
Delegation elevates others.



9. We Watch Who Gets Rewarded—and Who Gets Protected

Employees are always watching. When the wrong behaviors get rewarded—or the wrong people get protected—culture becomes performative.





Leadership Shift

Behavior you reward is behavior you multiply. What you water is what grows. If recognition goes to visibility over impact, or loyalty over performance, your culture will reflect exactly that.



Protect your values—not just your relationships.



10. **We Don't Need Perfect Leaders—We Need Present Ones**

Disconnection feels like disinterest. When leaders are physically present but emotionally absent, people notice. Teams disengage emotionally first—long before productivity drops. By the time the numbers show it, the culture has already shifted.





Leadership Shift

Presence is power. You don't have to have all the answers. **You have to show up** in the garden and notice what needs tending. The leaders people remember most were not the most polished—they were the most present.



Reflection: By Default or By Design?

Strengthen a Habit

Which of these ten leadership gaps are happening by default in your organization? Choose one leadership habit you will commit to strengthening starting now.

Clarify a System

Identify one process, expectation, or structure that needs to be made clearer. Ambiguity is a leadership choice. Clarity is too. Design it intentionally.

Stop Tolerating

Name one behavior you have been tolerating that is quietly shaping your culture. What you allow becomes the standard. Decide what you will no longer accept.



**Leadership Is
Experienced,
Not
Announced**



Lead With Roots, Not Just Results

-  **Lead earlier** — before problems take root.
-  **Decide cleaner** — remove the weeds of indecision.
-  **Coach sooner** — tend the growth before it wilts.
-  **Protect culture fiercely** — healthy gardens don't happen by accident.



Strong roots. Healthy growth. Protected culture.