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## Management capability is a skill, and we are not serious about it.

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Every time I see a post celebrating leadership over management, I feel it, that allergic reaction. As if one is visionary and the other is paperwork. As if the two exist on opposite ends of a spectrum rather than being completely inseparable.

In my experience, **the ability to manage effectively almost always translates into strong leadership**, fundamentally because management is not administration. It is a skill set – specific, learnable, and demanding. The ability to set clear goals. To give and receive feedback without flinching. To develop people deliberately. To read performance data and act on it. To negotiate across departments, reach workable compromises. To hold a team vision while understanding where the organisation is going long term. None of this is personality. None of it is inspiration. **It is craft** – and it takes practice and years to build properly.

What I see far too often is organisations promoting for the wrong reasons. Years in the role. Technical excellence. Deep functional knowledge. All valuable. None of them evidence that someone is ready to **manage people**. The requirements for that are rarely articulated clearly before the decision is made, let alone tested for. And when the new manager struggles, which they often do, because they were never prepared for what the role actually asks, the organisation is often unprepared. It should not be.

Training helps. But training and capability are not the same thing. One is an event. The other is **what happens after, repeatedly, under real pressure, with real people, when it matters**.

***We owe it to the people being managed AND to the managers themselves to take that difference seriously.***