

Where Is Your Gravity?

By Rahul Jindal

A senior new hire joins. The CEO welcomes her in all-hands, names the strategic priority, and says the company is “pivoting toward it.” She is energized. She believes the pitch. She joined for it.

By week three she has noticed something. The work that gets quoted in the next exec email is not the strategic priority. The senior hires landing in adjacent functions are not landing in hers. When two priorities collided in her first cross-functional meeting, the strategic one lost. She does not say anything. She is too senior to be the person who raises it. She starts learning how things really work here.

By month nine she has resolved her internal cognitive dissonance the only way an experienced operator can. The pitch is one company. The gravity is another. She picks which one to spend her career on, and almost always picks the gravity, because the gravity is what actually decides her scope, her promotions, her review, and her resources. The pitch was a hiring tool. The gravity is the institution.

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