

Reviews and 1:1s on levels

Reviews are where the forest pays for itself most visibly — because it replaces the worst part of them: the adjectives.

Talk in levels and ranks. "Moved three skills to confident this half, holds the full mid-rank set, two skills from senior" is reviewable — comparable to last year, legible to both sides, checkable against the map. "Showed real growth" is none of those things. Once a team tastes level-based reviews, adjective-based ones feel like astrology.

Use the forest as the shared artifact. The review conversation happens *over the map*, literally. Both people look at the same forest, and disagreement — the thing that makes reviews dread-inducing — changes character entirely. Instead of "I think you're underrating my year" (a conflict about judgment), it's "I'd put myself at confident on X" (a conversation about one skill at one level, with behavioural tells to check and a champion to consult if needed). Big vague conflicts become small concrete ones, and small concrete ones resolve.

Next steps are already on the map. The traditional review scramble — inventing "development goals" in the meeting — disappears. The next rank's skills *are* the plan for the period ahead; the only real conversation is sequencing and which real work will carry each skill. The person walks out with the same map they walked in with, plus agreement on the path.

The 1:1 version is the same thing, smaller: the monthly check-in from the review cadence. What moved, what stalled (look down — usually a prerequisite), what's the focus next month. Ten minutes over the map, and the annual review loses its power to surprise anyone.



Revision #3

Created 2026-07-08 16:09:29 UTC by Admin

Updated 2026-07-08 16:39:03 UTC by Admin