

FIELD GUIDE TOOL #14

The Escalation Audit

Chapter 14: System Design: Build Things That Don't Need You

DATE _____ COMPLETED BY _____

SITUATION _____

Use this tool to map the structural conditions producing dependency and recurring escalation in your current operation. Complete Part A before attempting any design work. The diagnosis must precede the solution.

When to use it. Best used when the leader's involvement is required too often for the operation to function independently.

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Part A: The Escalation Inventory

List the ten to fifteen situations that most frequently require your personal involvement. Be specific about the type of situation, not individual incidents.

Situation type	Frequency	Why does it require you personally?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Part B: Structural Diagnosis

For each escalation type, identify which structural condition is absent or insufficient.

Situation type	Structural condition (Role / Decision / Workflow / Metrics / Feedback)	Specific design gap
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

Part C: Priority Design Work

Identify the two or three structural gaps that are producing the most escalation volume. These are your priority design targets.

Priority gap	Design response and owner
Gap 1:	
Gap 2:	
Gap 3:	
What will you stop doing personally once these gaps are closed?	

Part D: The Judgment Documentation

For the judgment calls that cannot yet be structurally replaced, begin documenting the criteria behind them.

Judgment call type	Criteria I apply when making this call
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
Who will I review this documentation with, and by when?	

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Before moving to Chapter 15, confirm:

- ☐ You have inventoried at least ten recurring escalation types honestly.
- ☐ You have diagnosed the structural condition behind each one.
- ☐ You have identified your two or three highest-priority design targets.
- ☐ You have begun documenting the criteria behind your most frequent personal judgment calls.
- ☐ You have named specifically what you will stop doing once the structural gaps are closed.