



HRDIGITALPLAYGROUND • JOB ARCHITECTURE 101

Levels

What makes one job bigger than another, and how the steps line up across tracks.

IN THIS DECK

Jobs, not people

Leveling factors

Good criteria

The ladders

Level, grade, range

Job evaluation



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Before You Start

What you will be able to do, the example we use, and the words you will meet.

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

- ✓ Explain why we level jobs, not people
- ✓ Compare two jobs using leveling factors
- ✓ Tell good level criteria from weak ones
- ✓ Read the Professional, Support, and Management ladders
- ✓ Tell level, grade, range, and job evaluation apart

MEET THE EXAMPLE



Brightside Bakery

About 350 people making fresh bread and cakes. It grew fast without a plan for its jobs.



Bakery plant



20 shops



Delivery team



Head office

Made-up example

WORDS YOU WILL MEET

Level

The size and scope of a job

Level criteria

Written descriptions of what each level requires

Grade

A pay structure group that may hold one or more levels

Salary range

The pay opportunity for a grade

Job evaluation

The broader process of assessing relative job value

The colored tag on each page tells you what it is: an idea, an example, a practice, a warning, or a check.

We Level Jobs, Not People

The level describes the job. It stays the same whoever is doing it.



We level jobs, not people.

NONE OF THESE RAISES THE LEVEL ON ITS OWN



A high performer

Rewarded through reviews and pay

Same job, same level



A highly paid person

Pay sits within the job's range

Same job, same level



Long tenure

Years in a job do not resize it

Same job, same level

WHAT CAN CHANGE THE LEVEL

The job itself materially changes in

Scope

Complexity

Accountability

Impact

Decision authority

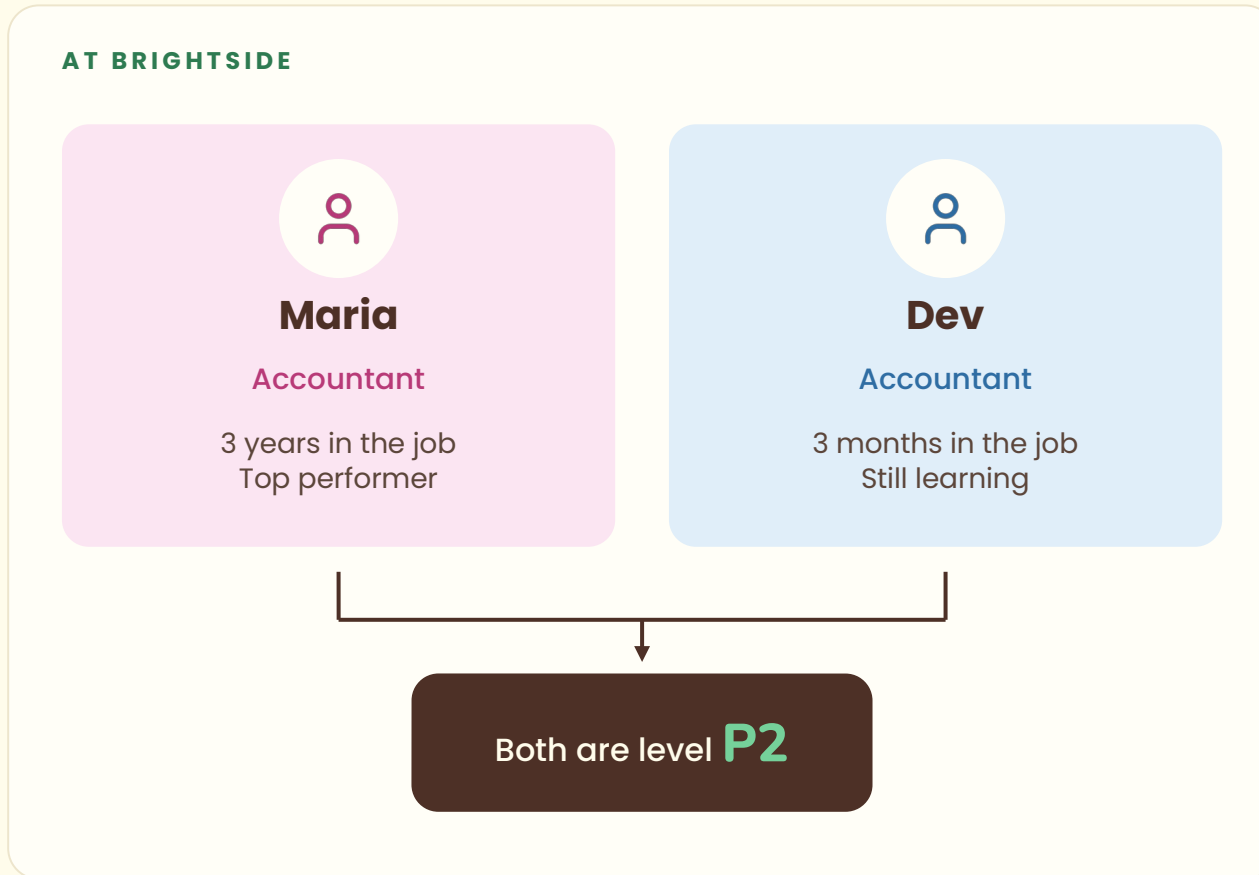
Then **re-evaluate the job**, for everyone in it.

Only a real change in the job itself can change its level.



Same Job, Same Level

Two people in the same job sit at the same level, however differently they perform.



Level

The size of the job. Set by the job, the same for everyone in it.



Performance

How well someone does the job. Reviewed for each person.



Place in the pay range

Where each person sits in the range. Set by pay policy, not by the level.

A great performer in a P2 job is a great P2. To move up, the job grows or the person moves to a bigger job.

What Makes a Job Bigger

Leveling compares jobs on a set of factors. These are the ones you will meet most often.



Knowledge

How much must it know?



Complexity

How hard are the problems?



Decisions

What does it decide?



Autonomy

How much direction?



Scope

How much does it cover?



Impact

How far do results reach?



Influence

Who must it persuade?



Leadership

Who does it guide?



Breadth

How many areas?



Ambiguity

How clear is the path?



Pick a set that fits your work. Brightside uses six: knowledge, problem solving, independence, impact, leadership, and communication.

No single list of factors is universal. What matters is using the same ones consistently.

What Good Level Criteria Look Like

Level descriptions only work if people can use them the same way. Four tests help.

WEAK

BETTER

Observable

"Shows strong ownership"

"Plans the month's work and resolves standard issues without review"

Consistent

"Senior means something different in each team"

"One set of level words used in every family"

Distinguishable

"P2 handles work well. P3 handles work very well"

"P2 handles standard work alone. P3 solves less-defined problems"

Usable across functions

"Closes the monthly books"

"Owns a recurring process from start to finish"

If two people read the criteria and place a job differently, the criteria need work.

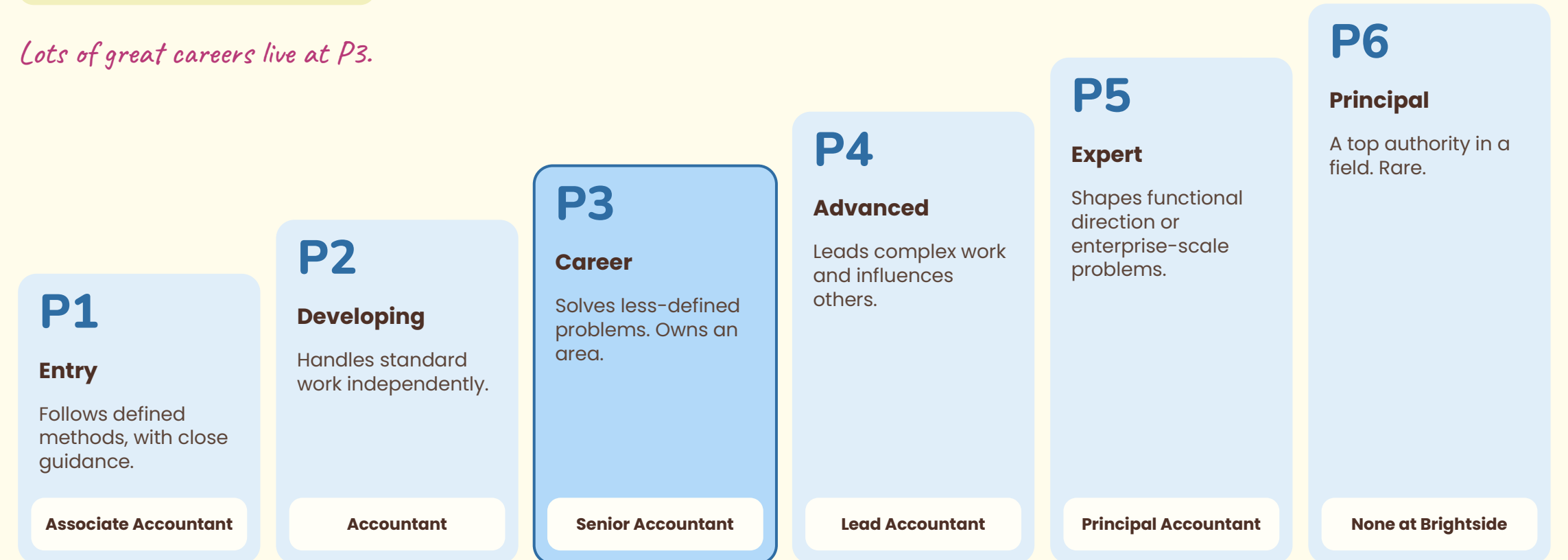


The Professional Ladder

The same kind of work, growing in scope at each step. Here is a common six-step pattern.

Illustrative. Step counts vary by company.

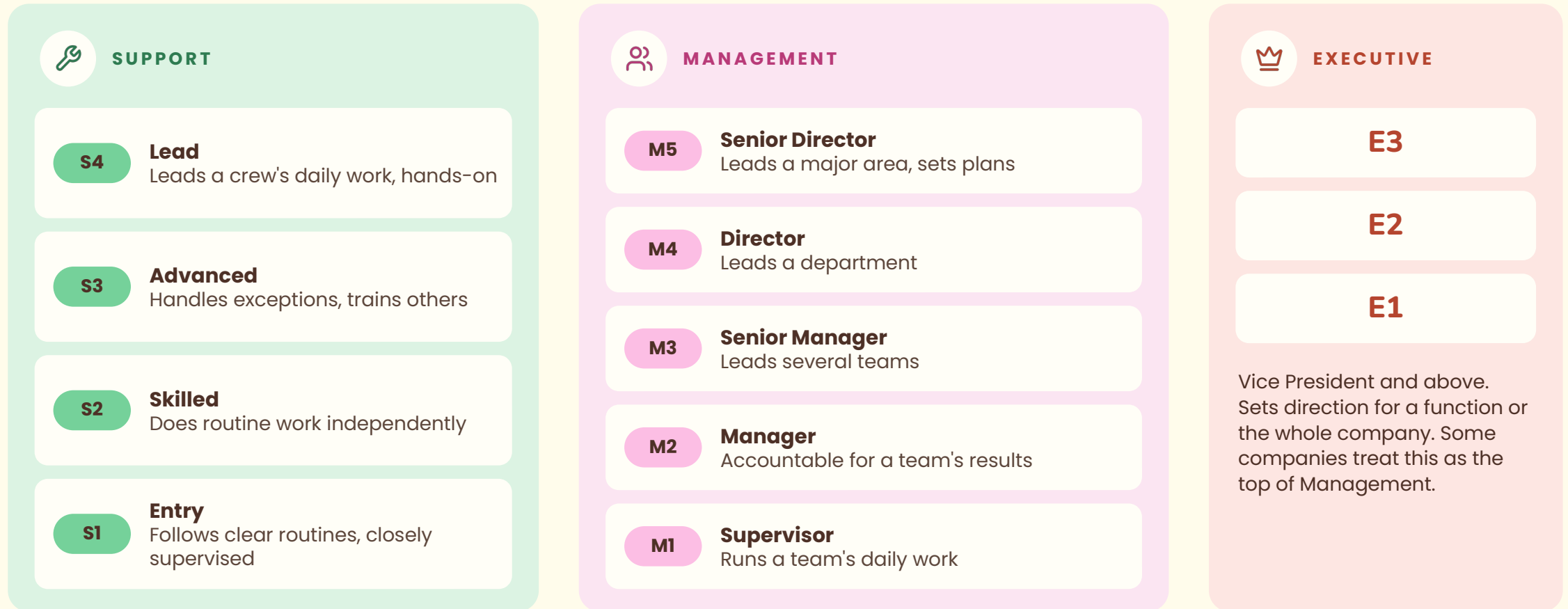
Lots of great careers live at P3.



Many people build a long career at P3, fully skilled and valued. Not every job needs to reach P6.

The Support and Management Ladders

Each track has its own steps, described by the work at each one.



Each track has its own ladder. The steps describe the work, not years of service.

Lining Up the Ladders

Jobs on the same row are about the same size, even on different tracks.

BRIGHTSIDE GRADE	SUPPORT	PROFESSIONAL	MANAGEMENT	EXECUTIVE
12				E3
11				E2
10				E1
9			M5	
8		P6	M4	
7		P5	M3	
6		P4	M2	
5		P3	M1	
4	S4	P2		
3	S3	P1		
2	S2			
1	S1			

Illustrative. Every company tunes its own.

P4 sits beside M2

A Lead Food Scientist and a Shop Manager are about the same size. At Brightside they share grade 6.



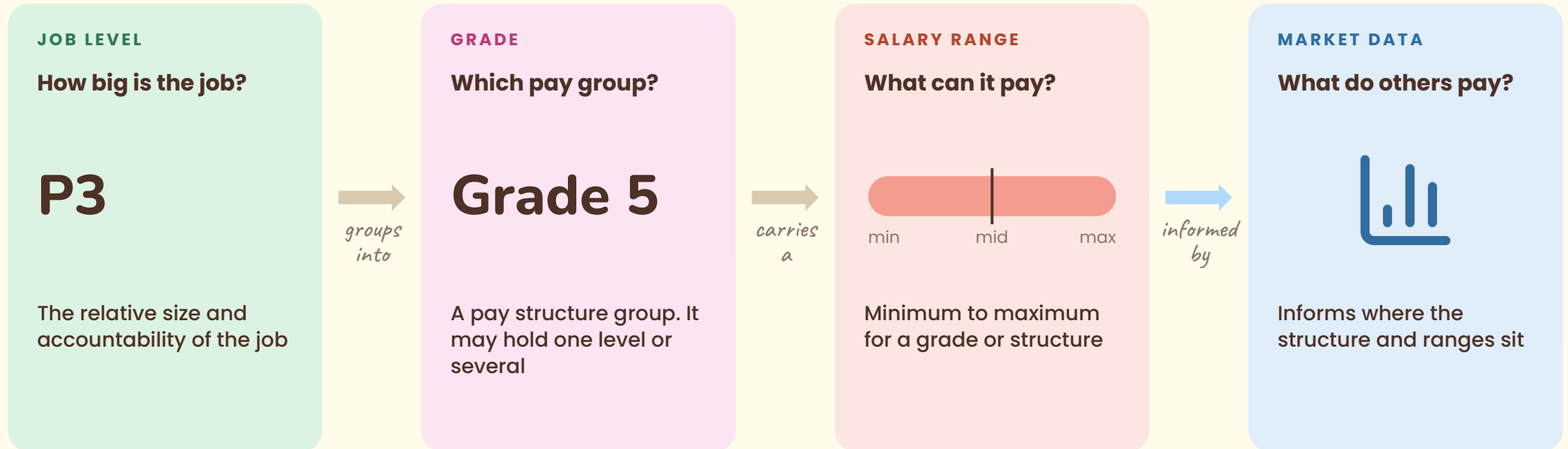
Rows are sizes. Grades are design

Brightside gives each row its own grade. Others group several rows into a broad band.

Same row, similar size, on any track. How rows connect to grades is a pay design choice.

Level, Grade, and Range Are Different

Four things that are easy to blur together. Each answers its own question.



Level does not automatically equal one grade or one range. A grade may hold several levels, and a company may run more than one structure.

The level sizes the job. Grades and ranges are pay design, informed by market data.

Leveling, Job Evaluation, and Market Pricing

Three terms you will hear. Two look inside the company, one looks outside.

INSIDE THE COMPANY

Job evaluation The broader, systematic process of assessing relative job value

COMMON METHODS



Whole-job leveling

Compare the whole job with written level descriptions. This places jobs into levels.

Job leveling



Factor comparison

Compare jobs factor by factor against benchmark jobs.



Point-factor

Score each factor and add up the points. Some firms sell their own systems.

OUTSIDE THE COMPANY



Market pricing

What the external labor market pays for comparable work.

It informs pay. It does not replace internal evaluation, and many jobs have no good market match.

There is no single right method. Many organizations combine internal evaluation with market pricing.



Four Leveling Myths

Beliefs that sound fair but quietly break a level structure.

MYTH

"More years of experience means a higher level."



FACT

Level is about the job. Experience helps someone grow into a bigger job.

MYTH

"A bigger team always means a higher level."



FACT

Team size is one input. Leading three experts can be bigger than leading twenty in routine work.

MYTH

"A scarce skill means a higher level."



FACT

Scarcity changes the market price, not the size of the job. Pay premiums handle it.

MYTH

"My level should match my old company's."



FACT

Every company sizes jobs its own way. Compare the work, not the label.

Level the job as it is needed today. Not the person, their history, or their hopes.



Which Job Is Bigger?

Three pairs of Brightside jobs. Decide A, B, or about the same, then turn the page.

1	A Bakery Assistant Follows set recipes on the line	vs	B Recipe Developer Invents and tests new products	A	B	Same
2	A Shop Manager Runs one shop of 8 people	vs	B Regional Manager Leads 6 shops through their managers	A	B	Same
3	A Lead Food Scientist P4 expert, no team to lead	vs	B Shop Manager M2, leads a team of 8	A	B	Same



Decide on your answers before you turn the page. The model answers and the reasons are on the next page.

Compare jobs factor by factor. Different tracks can still be the same size.



Which Job Is Bigger: Model Answers

Compare with what you decided. The reason matters more than the label.

1

Bakery Assistant vs Recipe Developer

B is bigger

More knowledge and harder, less-defined problems.

2

Shop Manager vs Regional Manager

B is bigger

Wider scope and impact. Leads through other managers.

3

Lead Food Scientist vs Shop Manager

About the same

Same row on different tracks. Expertise and team leadership can be the same size.



The logic Look at knowledge, complexity, scope, and impact. A team of people is one input, not the whole answer.

Compare the work factor by factor. Track and team size alone do not decide it.



Quick Check

Three questions. Answer from memory first, then look back if you need to.

1 QUESTION 1

Two Accountants: one is a star, one is new. Their level is...

- A** Different, based on performance
- B** The same, because the job is the same
- C** Decided by each manager

2 QUESTION 2

Which is NOT a leveling factor?

- A** Problem complexity
- B** Impact
- C** Years with the company

3 QUESTION 3

A job's scope and decision authority grow a lot. What should happen?

- A** Nothing. Levels never change
- B** Re-evaluate the job
- C** Raise the level of the best performer only

Answers, with the reason behind each one, are on the next page.

Remember

The whole deck in three lines, plus the quiz answers.



THREE THINGS TO KEEP

- 1** We level jobs, not people. Only a real change in the job changes the level.
- 2** Good criteria are observable, consistent, and tell adjacent levels apart.
- 3** Level, grade, and range are different. Grades and ranges are pay design.

Size the job, not the person.



CHECK YOUR ANSWERS



Same job, same level. Performance shows up in reviews and rewards.



Tenure is about the person. Leveling factors describe the job.



A material change in scope or authority is a reason to re-evaluate the job.

Levels make jobs comparable. That is what makes careers visible and pay decisions consistent.





Job Architecture 101: Levels

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