Twelve months of empty chairs

A leader's review sheet

Many jobs disappear quietly, when people leave and nobody replaces them. This sheet helps you look back over the last twelve months and make those choices on purpose.

Step 1. List every role on your team that was not refilled in the last twelve months. Write one line per role: the role, the month the person left, and the reason they left.

Step 2. For each role, answer four questions.

- Decided or drifted? Did someone decide not to refill it, or did it just happen?
- Where did the work go? To a colleague, to AI or automation, to a vendor, or nowhere?
- What happened to the capacity? Name what the time was used for, if anyone knows.
- Who knows? Have the people on the team been told why the role was not refilled?

Step 3. Mark each role with one of three labels: KEEP OPEN (refill it), REDESIGN (refill it as a different role), or RETIRE (the work is gone, and you can explain why).

Step 4. Choose one role where the answer was "it just happened". Make a decision this month, and tell your team what you decided and why.

For employees: write three things in your job AI could already do, and three things only you can do. Spend the next month growing the second list.

Watch the episode: Microsoft's 60,000 buyouts: how jobs really disappear, on the TechTonic Conversations channel on YouTube.
Read the framework for free: thesummitla.com/the-intelligent-organization

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