

Play 21 — Luck, Opportunity, and the Myth of Pure Merit

These questions are designed to help you reflect honestly on how luck, timing, preparation, and responsibility have shaped your leadership journey.

1. Looking back on your career, what was your first significant “lucky break”? What circumstances made it possible?
2. At the time, did you recognize it as luck — or only later, in hindsight?
3. What skills, behaviors, or attitudes helped you turn that opportunity into progress rather than a missed chance?
4. Where in your career did reputation precede position — when others trusted your competence before you held formal authority?
5. What period of your professional life required patience rather than progress? What did that period teach you?
6. How actively do you work today to increase your own “luck surface area” (networks, curiosity, exposure, learning)?
7. In what ways might you over-attribute success to effort and under-acknowledge timing, circumstance, or support from others?
8. How does recognizing the role of luck change the way you lead, judge performance, or reward success?
9. Who in your organization or network might be one opportunity away from a breakthrough — if someone opened the door?
10. What is one concrete action you can take this month to turn your own luck into opportunity for someone else?

Take one insight from your answers this week and test it in your next decision or team interaction.