Platform Engineering

Yearly Evaluation & Bonus Framework

5-Pillar Model with Level-Scaled Direction

Inspired by Meta's Engineering Performance Framework

Executive Summary

This framework provides a structured, objective evaluation model for engineering teams. It integrates Meta's proven performance axes, particularly the separation of **Project Impact** from **Engineering Excellence**, and the level-scaled **Direction** component.

The 5-pillar structure recognizes that senior engineers should be evaluated differently than junior engineers, with increasing weight on strategic direction and organizational influence as level increases.

Design Principles

- **Impact-Focused:** Rewards business outcomes, not activity or hours worked
- **Level-Appropriate:** Expectations scale with seniority; Direction weight increases at senior levels
- **Excellence Separated:** Distinguishes 'shipping features' from 'making engineering better'
- **Platform-Specific:** Accounts for reliability, toil reduction, and operational excellence
- **Transparent:** Clear criteria with structured self-review process

Review Cycle Structure

Following Meta's model, we use an **annual review cycle with a lighter 6-month checkpoint**.

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Annual Review (Year-End)

- Full self-review (1000 words max, enforced)
- Peer feedback collection (3-5 reviewers)
- Manager evaluation across all 5 pillars
- Calibration sessions across teams
- Final rating and bonus calculation

The 5 Performance Pillars

This framework uses 5 pillars with **level-scaled weights**. The Direction pillar increases significantly at senior levels, reflecting the expectation that senior engineers shape strategy, not just execute.

Pillar	Junior	Mid	Senior	Lead	Manager
1. Project Impact	40%	35%	30%	25%	20%
2. Direction	0%	5%	10%	20%	25%
3. Engineering Excellence	20%	20%	20%	20%	15%
4. Operational Ownership	25%	25%	25%	20%	15%
5. People Impact	15%	15%	15%	15%	25%

Key insight: As engineers progress, weight shifts from pure execution (Project Impact) toward strategic influence (Direction) and organizational leverage (People Impact).

Pillar 1: Project Impact

"What work was delivered and what was the business impact?"

This is the bread-and-butter axis for all engineers. Focus is on **impact**, not just activity. Engineers who make measurable impact on team, org, or company goals are rewarded over esoteric engineering pursuits.

Evaluation Criteria

- Consistency in hitting planned milestones and commitments
- Quality of execution: fewer regressions, rollbacks, post-deployment fixes
- Contribution to major platform capabilities and releases
- Measurable business or engineering outcomes (metrics, adoption, cost savings)
- Progress on long-poll projects (partial milestones count)

Scoring Rubric (0-4)

Score	Description
0	Frequently misses commitments; work has no measurable impact
1	Delivers but unpredictable; impact limited to immediate task scope
2	Meets most commitments; impact visible at team level
3	Highly reliable; impact visible at org level; recognized contributor
4	Elite execution; impact at company level; moves key business metrics

Pillar 2: Direction

"How did you influence the roadmap or set direction for your team/org?"

This pillar is **level-scaled**: junior engineers (0% weight) focus on execution, while Lead+ engineers (20-25% weight) are expected to shape strategy. This is where senior engineers differentiate themselves.

Evaluation Criteria

- Contributions to team/org roadmap planning
- Identifying top problems and doing due diligence research
- Creating feature proposals, design docs, and technical proposals
- Influencing and convincing others to solve important problems
- Setting longer-term vision or charter for your domain
- Translating strategic goals into actionable tactics

Scoring Rubric (0-4)

Score	Description
0	No involvement in roadmap or direction; purely executes assigned work
1	Occasionally suggests improvements; contributes to team discussions
2	Writes feature proposals; influences team-level roadmap; identifies problems proactively
3	Shapes org-level direction; drives strategic initiatives; influences cross-team priorities
4	Sets company-level technical direction; thought leader; defines multi-year strategy

Level Expectations

Level	Direction Expectation
Junior	Not evaluated; focus entirely on execution and learning
Mid	Beginning to contribute ideas; participates in roadmap discussions
Senior	Expected to write feature proposals, identify top problems, influence team direction
Lead	Shapes org-level strategy; drives cross-team technical decisions
Manager	Sets company-wide technical vision; defines multi-year platform strategy

Pillar 3: Engineering Excellence

"Did you meaningfully improve engineering aspects like code health, processes, tooling, or efficiency?"

This pillar is **separate from Project Impact**. Shipping features fast can create technical debt; this pillar rewards engineers who pay down that debt and make the engineering org better.

Evaluation Criteria

- Code health: refactoring, reducing complexity, removing dead code
- Test coverage improvements and test infrastructure
- Documentation quality: runbooks, ADRs, user guides
- Tooling and automation that enables other engineers
- CI/CD improvements, build time reductions
- Observability: monitoring, alerting, dashboards

Scoring Rubric (0-4)

Score	Description
0	Adds technical debt; no tests; poor code quality
1	Maintains status quo; adequate tests; doesn't degrade quality
2	Improves code health in touched areas; good documentation
3	Drives systematic improvements; builds tools others use; raises team bar
4	Transforms engineering practices; tools/patterns adopted org-wide

Pillar 4: Operational Ownership

"How well do you own the reliability and operability of your systems?"

This pillar is **specific to platform/infrastructure teams**. It captures the operational excellence that defines successful platform engineering: incident response, on-call quality, toil reduction, and proactive reliability work.

Evaluation Criteria

- Incident response: time to engage, investigation depth, resolution effectiveness
- On-call performance: alert handling, escalation judgment
- Reliability improvements: SLI/SLO ownership, monitoring, alert tuning
- Toil reduction: automation, self-service capabilities
- Proactive risk identification and capacity planning
- Post-incident quality: postmortems, action item follow-through

Scoring Rubric (0-4)

Score	Description
0	Avoids on-call; slow to respond; incidents extend due to lack of engagement
1	Handles on-call but escalates quickly; limited investigation depth
2	Reliable on-call; resolves standard issues; completes postmortem actions
3	Strong incident leader; drives toil reduction; proactively improves reliability
4	Incident commander caliber; prevents incidents through proactive work; measurably improves SLOs

Pillar 5: People Impact

"What activities were done to support other engineers and the larger community?"

This pillar captures the activities that make a workplace effective and collaborative. For engineering teams, it includes internal customer support alongside traditional mentoring and hiring contributions.

Evaluation Criteria

- Hiring: interviewing, sourcing, candidate experience
- Mentoring: supporting other engineers' growth and careers
- Knowledge sharing: tech talks, brown bags, documentation
- Internal customer support: helping consuming teams succeed
- Onboarding: helping new team members ramp up
- Team culture: organizing events, fostering inclusion

Scoring Rubric (0-4)

Score	Description
0	No contribution to hiring/mentoring; unhelpful to others
1	Participates in interviews when asked; helps when convenient
2	Regular interviewer; answers questions; supports teammates
3	Active mentor; gives tech talks; sought out for help; strong interviewer
4	Culture carrier; develops multiple engineers; shapes hiring bar; internal customers praise by name

Peer Review Process

Peer feedback provides 360° visibility into collaboration and behaviors. For platform teams, we include **internal customer feedback** from consuming teams.

Reviewer Selection (3-5 per engineer)

- 2-3 direct teammates
- 1-2 internal customers (engineers from consuming teams)
- Minimum 3 months collaboration; manager validates list

Peer Review Questions (1-5 scale + comments)

1. **Collaboration:** How effectively does this engineer work with others?
2. **Communication:** How clear, transparent, and proactive is their communication?
3. **Reliability:** How much can you rely on this person during incidents or urgent situations?
4. **Platform Support:** (For internal customers) How responsive and helpful is this engineer?
5. **Engineering Quality:** How well does their work improve code health and engineering practices?

Peer Feedback Integration

- Peer feedback influences 100% of People Impact pillar
- Peer feedback influences 25% of Operational Ownership pillar
- Peer feedback influences 25% of Engineering technical pillar
- Manager shares thematic summary (not individual attributions) in feedback session

Overall Rating Scale

Following Meta's model, final scores map to three broad categories:

Rating	Score Range	Description
Exceeds Expectations	≥85%	Outstanding performance; ready for promotion consideration
Meets Expectations	50-84%	Solid performance; meeting level expectations
Below Expectations	<50%	Performance concerns; improvement plan needed

Scoring & Bonus Calculation

Formula

For each pillar: **Weighted Score = (Rubric Score / 4) × Pillar Weight (for level)**

Final Score = Sum of all Weighted Scores

Example: Senior Platform Engineer

Pillar	Raw Score	Weight	Weighted Score
Project Impact	3/4	30%	22.5%
Direction	3/4	10%	7.5%

Pillar	Raw Score	Weight	Weighted Score
Engineering Excellence	3/4	20%	15.0%
Operational Ownership	4/4	25%	25.0%
People Impact	3/4	15%	11.25%
TOTAL			**81.25%**

Bonus Calculation

Yearly Bonus = Base Bonus × Final Score
Example: Base Bonus of 10,000 AED × 81.25% = **8,125 AED**

Calibration Process

Meta-style calibration uses mash-ups across teams to normalize and de-bias scores.

Calibration Steps

1. **Manager Scoring:** Each manager scores their reports independently
2. **Mash-Up Sessions:** Managers present cases; peers challenge and compare
3. **Distribution Check:** Verify score distribution matches expectations
4. **Borderline Discussion:** Deep-dive on scores at category boundaries
5. **Final Adjustment:** Adjust outliers with documented rationale

Self-Review Template

Engineers complete this self-review annually (1000 words max, enforced). A lighter version (500 words) is used for the 6-month checkpoint.

SELF-REVIEW — ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Name: _____ Level: _____ Review Period: _____

1. PROJECT IMPACT

What were your key deliverables? What was the measurable impact on team/org/company goals?

_____

_____

2. DIRECTION (if applicable to your level)

How did you influence roadmap or strategy? What RFCs, proposals, or technical decisions did you drive?

_____

_____

3. ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

How did you improve code health, testing, documentation, or tooling? What technical debt did you pay down?

_____

_____

4. OPERATIONAL OWNERSHIP

How did you contribute to reliability? Describe incident response, on-call performance, toil reduction.

_____

_____

5. PEOPLE IMPACT

How did you support hiring, mentoring, knowledge sharing, or internal customers?

_____

_____

6. GROWTH AREAS

What areas do you want to develop? What support do you need from your manager?

_____

_____

Manager Evaluation Template

MANAGER EVALUATION — ANNUAL REVIEW

Engineer: _____ Level: _____

Manager: _____ Date: _____

1. PROJECT IMPACT (Weight: ____%)

Score: ___/4 → Weighted: ____%

Evidence: _____

2. DIRECTION (Weight: ____%)

Score: ___/4 → Weighted: ____%

Evidence: _____

3. ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE (Weight: ____%)

Score: ___/4 → Weighted: ____%
Evidence: _____

4. OPERATIONAL OWNERSHIP (Weight: ____%)
Score: ___/4 → Weighted: ____%
Evidence: _____

5. PEOPLE IMPACT (Weight: ____%)
Score: ___/4 → Weighted: ____%
Evidence: _____

FINAL SCORE: ____%
Rating: ☐ Exceeds ☐ Meets ☐ Below Expectations
Base Bonus: _____ × Final Score = **Final Bonus: _____**

Manager Summary:
Strengths: _____
Development Areas: _____
Next-Level Goals: _____
Promotion Readiness: _____