

Alpha Unlimited Inc.

Employee Promotion Management Bylaw

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Approved by: _____ (CEO/General Manager)

Preamble: Our Promotion Philosophy — Growth is Achievement

At Alpha Unlimited Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "the Company"), we believe that a promotion is not merely a change in title or an increase in compensation. It is the formal recognition of an employee's continuous growth, expanding impact, and consistent demonstration of higher-level capabilities. Our goal is to create an environment where every team member can be the "architect" of their own career, and promotions are the solid milestones in this grand structure.

This bylaw aims to establish a clear, transparent, fair, and data- and impact-driven promotion framework. We have drawn upon the best practices of the world's leading technology companies, striving to eliminate bias and subjectivity from promotion decisions. We ensure that every promotion decision can withstand scrutiny and can genuinely motivate our best talent to tackle the next summit.

We do not view promotion as a reward, but as a confirmation of a "fact that has already occurred"—that the employee has been consistently performing at the standards of the next level and has achieved corresponding results. The core of this bylaw is to empower employees, clarify pathways, and, through a rigorous process, ensure the Company's organizational capabilities evolve in lockstep with its business development.

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Part One: General Provisions & Promotion Philosophy

Chapter 1: Basic Principles

Article 1: Purpose and Vision

To support the Company's mission to "bring positive change to the world through technology and innovation," this bylaw aims to establish an internal promotion system that can identify, develop, and advance top talent. Our vision is to closely link each employee's career growth with the Company's business success and to empower employees to take charge of their own career development through an exceptionally transparent and fair process.

Article 2: Scope of Application

This bylaw applies to all full-time regular employees at all Company locations worldwide. The career development of contract workers, interns, and other non-regular employees shall refer to the spirit of this bylaw and be handled according to their individual contracts and relevant management regulations.

Article 3: Division of Powers and Responsibilities

- **Human Resources & Organizational Development (HR & OD):** As the designers and guardians of this bylaw's process, this department is responsible for:
 - Formulating, interpreting, and updating this bylaw and related tools and processes.

- Designing and maintaining the company-wide career architecture, ladders, and competency matrices.
- Organizing and operating the company-level Promotion Calibration Committee.
- Providing relevant training and enablement to managers and employees at all levels.
- Ensuring the promotion process aligns with principles of fairness, consistency, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
- **Managers at All Levels:** As the front-line drivers of talent development, they are responsible for:
 - Conducting regular career development conversations with employees and providing continuous feedback.
 - Identifying employees with promotion potential and assisting them in preparing their "Promotion Packet."
 - Writing objective, fact-based manager endorsements.
 - Representing their teams in departmental promotion reviews and accurately communicating promotion decisions and feedback.
- **Promotion Calibration Committee:** Comprised of senior, cross-functional leaders at the Director level and above, this committee serves as the highest review body to ensure company-wide consistency in promotion standards. It is responsible for:
 - Reviewing and calibrating promotion nominations from all departments.
 - Challenging and deeply probing the rationale behind nominations to ensure objectivity in decisions.
 - Maintaining the Company's talent standard "bar" for specific levels.
 - Providing clear, actionable feedback for all candidates, regardless of outcome.

Article 4: Definition of Terms

- **Career Ladder:** Defines the career progression path from junior to senior levels within a specific job family, clarifying the expectations and responsibilities at each level.
- **Competency Matrix:** A detailed description of the specific knowledge, skills, and behaviors an employee is expected to possess at each level.
- **Promotion Packet:** A comprehensive digital folder that consolidates all the evidence used to assess whether a candidate should be promoted. It is the core basis for promotion decisions.
- **Calibration:** A structured meeting process where managers from various teams come together to discuss, review, and adjust performance evaluations or promotion nominations to ensure that assessment standards are fair and consistent across the entire organization.
- **Impact:** The measurable results and contributions generated by an employee's work. It includes not only "what" was accomplished but also "how" it was accomplished and the value it brought to the team, product, customers, or the Company as a whole. Impact should be evaluated based on its Scope, Complexity, and Autonomy.

Chapter 2: The Alpha Promotion Philosophy

Article 5: Impact-Driven, Not Tenure-Based

The sole criterion for promotion is whether an employee has consistently demonstrated the capabilities and impact required of the next level. Time in role can be a reference for accumulated experience but is by no means the decisive factor for promotion. We evaluate the Scope, Complexity, and Autonomy of an employee's achievements, with a particular emphasis on contributions that extend beyond their immediate team or function. This means a new hire who quickly delivers a high-impact, cross-functional project may be promoted sooner than a long-serving employee who has only delivered consistent, but not next-level, results. The focus is on the scale and quality of the contribution, not the length of service. We believe this approach promotes a meritocratic culture and motivates all employees to continuously seek out opportunities for greater responsibility and deeper influence, ensuring that our talent pipeline is always dynamic and filled with high performers.

Article 6: Growth Mindset & Continuous Feedback

We believe that abilities can be continuously improved through effort and learning. The promotion process itself is an important developmental tool. We encourage frequent, candid, and constructive feedback conversations between employees and managers, integrating career development into daily work rather than waiting for the promotion cycle to begin discussions. We view "no-surprises" as a core principle of our feedback culture. This means a manager should consistently be communicating with their reports about their performance, what they are doing well, and where they can improve. It is the manager's responsibility to regularly check in on progress toward the next level, ensuring that an employee is never blindsided by a promotion outcome. This continuous feedback loop empowers employees to proactively address development areas and build a strong case for promotion over time, rather than scrambling for evidence at the last minute.

Article 7: Evidence-Based & Data-Driven

All promotion decisions must be based on verifiable evidence and data. Every claim made in a promotion packet should be supported by specific projects, metrics, or results. We are committed to minimizing subjective judgment and letting the facts and data speak for themselves. The Impact Portfolio is a critical component for this. For example, instead of a manager stating, "Jane is a great collaborator," the promotion packet should provide concrete evidence: "Jane's collaboration on Project X led to a 15% reduction in delivery time, as documented in this project report." Similarly, instead of "John's code is high quality," the evidence should be a link to a pull request with an excellent review or a report showing a significant reduction in bug tickets for a service he owns. This rigorous, evidence-based approach holds everyone accountable and ensures that promotion decisions are both fair and defensible.

Article 8: Shared Accountability

Promotion is a shared responsibility among the employee, manager, team, and the Company.

- The **employee** has the ultimate ownership of their own career development. They are expected to be proactive in seeking feedback, identifying opportunities to

demonstrate next-level impact, and compiling the evidence for their promotion packet.

- The **manager** is responsible for creating opportunities, providing guidance, and offering resources. This includes helping the employee find projects that will showcase next-level skills and acting as a strong advocate during the review process.
- The **Company** is responsible for providing a clear roadmap and a fair evaluation process. This bylaw, along with our career architecture and regular training, is our commitment to this responsibility.
- The **team** shares the responsibility of providing honest and constructive feedback. The quality of peer feedback is a cornerstone of our 360-degree review process.

Article 9: Fairness, Consistency & Bias Mitigation

We are committed to creating a level playing field. Through structured evaluation tools, diverse review committees, and unconscious bias training, we actively identify and eliminate potential systemic biases in the promotion process, ensuring all employees have an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background, gender, or tenure. The composition of the Calibration Committee is specifically designed to mitigate single-point-of-failure bias. We also actively audit promotion outcomes to ensure that promotion rates are consistent across different demographics and that decisions are not influenced by factors such as a manager's personal relationship with a candidate or the team's political standing. This proactive approach to bias mitigation ensures that our promotion system is not only fair in principle but also in practice.

Part Two: Promotion Framework & Core Processes

Chapter 3: Career Architecture

Article 10: Job Families

To reflect the uniqueness of different professional fields, the Company categorizes all positions into various job families, such as:

- Software Engineering (SWE)
- Product Management (PM)
- Data Science & Analytics (DS)
- UX Design (UX)
- Marketing (MKT)
- Sales & Business Development (S&BD)
- Human Resources (HR)
- Finance & Accounting (F&A)

Each family has its own dedicated career ladder and competency matrix, which are regularly reviewed by senior leaders and HR. This ensures that the specific skills required to advance in a technical role, for example, are distinct from those needed to advance in a marketing role.

Article 11: Career Ladders & Role Levels

1. **Dual-Track Career Path:** To respect different career aspirations, we offer two parallel development tracks:
 - **Individual Contributor (IC) Track:** Focuses on deepening professional skills, solving complex technical problems, and expanding influence within a specialized domain. This track is for those who are passionate about their craft and want to become a recognized expert without the people management responsibilities. The IC track offers a clear path to high-level strategic influence.
 - **Manager (M) Track:** Focuses on team building, talent development, strategic planning, and resource coordination. This track is for those who are passionate about growing and empowering others. A manager's impact is measured by the success of their team, not just their individual contributions.
 - Levels on both tracks are equivalent in terms of compensation, impact, and respect within the Company. It is possible to transition between tracks (see Article 38).
2. **Role Levels:** The Company uses a globally unified leveling framework to ensure consistent standards. For example, in the Software Engineering family, levels might be defined as:
 - **L3: Software Engineer I:** An entry-level contributor who is still learning the company's codebase, processes, and tools. They work on well-defined tasks under close supervision.
 - **L4: Software Engineer II:** A fully independent contributor who can own features from end-to-end. They are capable of breaking down complex problems and delivering solutions with minimal guidance.
 - **L5: Senior Software Engineer:** A leader who not only delivers on their own but also leads small-to-medium sized projects and mentors junior engineers. Their influence extends to the team's technical strategy and best practices.
 - **L6: Staff Software Engineer:** An IC who drives the technical strategy for a team or a broader area. They solve ambiguous, cross-functional problems and often act as a technical advisor to product managers and senior leaders.
 - **L7: Principal Software Engineer:** A company-wide technical authority who solves the most challenging problems and sets industry-leading technical direction. They are recognized for their deep expertise and ability to drive innovation that impacts the entire organization.

Each level has a clear "Expectations Document" that details the required performance and impact at that level.

Article 12: Competency Matrix by Level

The competency matrix operationalizes the career ladder, breaking down the expectations for each level into several core competency dimensions and providing behavioral indicators.

- **Universal Competencies:** Applicable to all employees and linked to the Company's leadership principles, such as **Customer Obsession**, **Ownership**, **Deliver Results**, and **Think Big**. These are the fundamental values we expect from every employee, regardless of their role.
- **Functional Competencies:** Specific to a particular job family, for example:
 - **Software Engineering:** Programming Ability, System Design, Project Execution, Technical Leadership, Cross-Functional Influence.

- **Product Management:** Product Strategy, Data Analysis, User Insight, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Go-to-Market Strategy.
- **Behavioral Indicators:** For each competency dimension, the matrix provides specific behavioral descriptions that clarify "what good looks like." For instance, a Senior Software Engineer (L5) might be expected in "Technical Leadership" to "mentor 2-3 junior engineers and lead the technical architecture of a medium-sized project." This detailed breakdown provides a clear roadmap for employees and a consistent rubric for managers to use during evaluations. (For a detailed example, please see Appendix A)

Chapter 4: Promotion Cycles & Timeline

Article 13: Standard Promotion Cycles

The Company holds two standard promotion cycles per year, typically aligned with performance review cycles:

- **First Half (H1) Cycle:** Usually begins in February, with nominations due in March, and decisions are finalized in June. Promotions become effective on July 1.
- **Second Half (H2) Cycle:** Usually begins in August, with nominations due in September, and decisions are finalized in December. Promotions become effective on January 1 of the following year.

These cycles are designed to give managers and employees ample time to prepare a comprehensive promotion packet and for the review committees to conduct a thorough evaluation, ensuring a fair and deliberate process for all candidates.

Article 14: Off-Cycle Promotions

In exceptional cases, such as when an employee demonstrates explosive growth and contribution far exceeding expectations, or to meet urgent business needs, a manager may initiate an off-cycle promotion in discussion with their HR Business Partner and department head. The review standards for off-cycle promotions will be stricter than those for standard cycles to ensure their rarity and fairness. An off-cycle promotion must be unanimously approved by the Departmental Review Committee and receive final approval from the CEO. This is a deliberate exception to the standard process and is reserved for truly extraordinary circumstances where a candidate is already performing at a level far above their current title, and the business demands an immediate recognition of that fact.

Article 15: Annual Promotion Timeline Planning

The HR department will publish a detailed timeline before the start of each promotion cycle. A typical timeline might be:

- **Weeks 1-2:** HR announces the start of the cycle and opens the nomination system. Managers begin identifying potential candidates.
- **Weeks 3-5:** Employees prepare their self-assessments, managers prepare nominations, and they jointly finalize the list of peer reviewers.
- **Weeks 6-8:** Feedback requests are sent to peers and stakeholders, and feedback collection is completed.

- **Week 9:** The employee and manager finalize and submit the "Promotion Packet." This is a hard deadline.
- **Weeks 10-11:** Departments hold their promotion review meetings, where managers discuss candidates and determine which ones to recommend for the company-wide calibration.
- **Week 12:** The company-level Promotion Calibration Committee convenes to ensure consistency across all departments.
- **Week 13:** Senior leadership gives final approval.
- **Week 14:** HR finalizes the results, and managers conduct one-on-one communication with employees. This structured timeline ensures that no steps are rushed and that every candidate receives the attention they deserve.

Chapter 5: Nomination & Document Preparation

Article 16: Nomination Eligibility and Initiation

1. **Nomination Eligibility:** Employees who have been in their current role for at least 12 months and received a rating of "Meets Expectations" or higher in their most recent performance review are eligible for nomination. Exceptions to the 12-month rule require a compelling case demonstrating significant, sustained impact in a shorter period.
2. **Nomination Initiation:**
 - **Manager-Initiated:** The most common form. The manager initiates a promotion nomination based on their observation of the employee's sustained performance. The manager should provide continuous feedback to the employee about their progress towards the next level. A manager's nomination is a strong endorsement and is taken as a sign of confidence.
 - **Self-Initiated:** For levels L5 and above, if an employee believes they are consistently performing at the next level and has had thorough discussions with their manager, but the manager has not initiated a nomination, the employee may choose to self-nominate. A self-nomination requires a more detailed portfolio of evidence and still requires comments from the manager (even if the manager is not supportive). The HR Business Partner will be involved to mediate and ensure fairness in this process. This self-nomination path exists to empower employees and to prevent a manager's hesitation or bias from becoming a barrier to an employee's career progression.

Article 17: Core Components of the "Promotion Packet"

The promotion packet is the centerpiece of the entire review process. All decisions are based on the information contained within this packet. A complete packet should include the following:

1. Employee Self-Assessment Narrative
2. Manager's Endorsement
3. Peer & Stakeholder Feedback
4. Impact Portfolio
5. A Summary of the Candidate's Recent Performance Reviews

Article 18: Employee Self-Assessment Narrative

This is the employee's opportunity to advocate for themselves. The employee should, in the first person, clearly, concisely, and based on data and facts, articulate why they have met the requirements of the next level.

- **Structure:** It is recommended to organize the narrative around the competency matrix of the target level, providing 2-3 of the most powerful projects or achievements as examples for each core competency. This structure ensures that the narrative is directly relevant to the evaluation criteria.
- **Method:** The **STAR method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) or the **CAR framework** (Context, Action, Result) is strongly recommended for describing achievements. These methods provide a clear, structured way to explain how an action led to a specific outcome.
- **Focus:** It's crucial to explain not just "what you did," but also "how you did it," "who you influenced," "what business value you created," and "what next-level capabilities you demonstrated in the process." For example, instead of "I built a new login page," a better statement would be, "In a situation where our login conversion was low (Context), I took the initiative to redesign the entire page (Action). As a result, we saw a 10% increase in user sign-ups (Result), which directly contributed to our quarterly user growth goals." This level of detail is what the committee is looking for.

Article 19: Manager's Endorsement

The manager's endorsement serves to supplement and validate the employee's self-assessment. The manager needs to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the candidate from an objective standpoint.

- **Content:**
 - **Summary of Recommendation:** Start by clearly stating why you are recommending the employee for promotion, highlighting their 1-2 most critical contributions.
 - **Competency Dimension Assessment:** Provide specific evidence for each item, referencing the competency matrix of the target level. Use quantifiable data whenever possible. For example, "The candidate has demonstrated strong technical leadership by designing and leading the implementation of the new API gateway, which reduced latency by 20% and is now used by five different teams."
 - **Growth Trajectory:** Describe the employee's growth and transformation over the past one to two years, highlighting how they have evolved from their previous role. This provides a narrative of development, showing the committee that the employee's readiness is a result of sustained effort.
 - **Future Potential:** Articulate your confidence in the employee's ability to contribute on a larger scale after the promotion.
 - **Areas for Development:** Honestly point out areas where the employee still needs to develop. This increases the objectivity and credibility of the endorsement and serves as a roadmap for their continued growth.
- **What to Avoid:** Avoid vague adjectives (e.g., "he is hardworking," "she is smart"). Focus on observable behaviors and quantifiable results. The manager's endorsement is a powerful document and should be treated as a professional, fact-based report.

Article 20: Peer & Stakeholder Feedback

To obtain a comprehensive, 360-degree perspective, the promotion packet must include feedback from multiple sources.

- **Selecting Reviewers:** The list of reviewers is decided jointly by the employee and manager and should be diverse, including:
 - **Direct Peers:** At least 2, who can attest to the candidate's day-to-day contributions and teamwork.
 - **Cross-Functional Collaborators:** At least 2, who can attest to the breadth of the candidate's impact and their ability to influence outside of their immediate team. For example, a software engineer should seek feedback from a product manager and a UX designer.
 - **Senior Colleagues / Mentors:** At least 1, who can evaluate the candidate's potential from a higher vantage point.
 - **(If applicable) Direct Reports:** For candidates being promoted to a management role, anonymous feedback from direct reports is necessary to gauge their effectiveness as a leader.
- **Feedback Collection:** Standardized feedback requests are sent via the company's internal system. Questions will revolve around the Company's leadership principles and the candidate's specific contributions. The feedback is confidential from the candidate and is for the review committee's reference only. (For a feedback request template, please see Appendix C)

Article 21: Impact Portfolio

This section provides the evidence supporting all written statements. The candidate should provide links or attachments that directly demonstrate their contributions. The portfolio is not a list of tasks but a curated collection of evidence. Examples include:

- Design documents, technical specification documents with comments/feedback from colleagues and stakeholders.
 - Project management dashboards, data analysis reports, and key metrics that show the business impact of their work.
 - Links to launched product features, screenshots of customer feedback or public-facing communications.
 - Recordings or presentations from public speaking engagements, internal or external.
 - Links to code commit history and pull requests with substantial reviews.
 - A summary of patents filed or research papers published.
- The goal of the portfolio is to leave no room for doubt about the candidate's impact. It should serve as a powerful, objective summary of their achievements.

Chapter 6: Review, Calibration, and Decision

Article 22: Overview of the Promotion Review Process

Promotion decisions follow a multi-layered review model to ensure objectivity and consistency.

1. **Submission:** The manager submits the complete promotion packet to HR.

2. **HR Screening:** HR & OD conducts an initial review to ensure all components of the packet are complete and meet the bylaw's requirements. This step is a procedural check, not a content evaluation.
3. **Departmental Review:** A committee of managers and directors within the department conducts the first round of review. This is where the initial discussions and vetting happen.
4. **Company Calibration:** Nominations that pass the departmental review are forwarded to the company-level Promotion Calibration Committee for cross-departmental calibration. This is the most crucial step for ensuring fairness and consistency across the organization.
5. **Final Approval:** The committee's decisions are presented to the business unit head or CEO for final approval.

Article 23: Departmental Promotion Review Committee

- **Composition:** Composed of all directors and managers within the department/business unit.
- **Purpose:**
 - To align on promotion standards within the department.
 - To discuss and select the strongest candidates to be recommended to the company-level calibration meeting.
 - To ensure the quality of the submitted promotion packets and provide preliminary feedback.
- **Process:** Each nominating manager has a fixed amount of time (e.g., 5-10 minutes) to present the case for their candidate, followed by questions and discussion from other managers. At the end of the meeting, each candidate is rated or voted on to decide whether to recommend them to the next round.

Article 24: Company-Level Promotion Calibration Committee

This is the most critical step for ensuring a consistent promotion "bar" across the entire company.

- **Composition:**
 - **Chair:** A Senior Director or VP from HR & OD, who facilitates the meeting but does not vote.
 - **Members:** Senior leaders (Directors or VPs) from different job families, recognized for their excellent judgment. Members typically serve for one year to ensure a mix of experience and fresh perspectives. This cross-functional composition is key to preventing a single department's culture or standards from dominating the promotion decisions.
 - **HR Business Partners:** Serve as advisors, providing data insights and process support.
- **Purpose:**
 - To calibrate for differences in evaluation standards between different departments and managers.
 - To challenge ambiguous arguments and ensure every promotion decision is backed by solid evidence.
 - To maintain the Company's talent standard "bar" for specific levels.

Article 25: Operating Principles of Calibration Meetings

1. **Pre-Meeting Preparation:** All committee members must carefully read their assigned promotion packets before the meeting and prepare questions.
2. **Packet Presentation:** Each packet is presented by a committee member who is not the nominating manager, providing an objective summary of the packet's strengths and weaknesses from a third-party perspective.
3. **In-Depth Discussion:** The nominating manager speaks only when asked questions. Committee members will engage in a deep debate about the candidate's scope of impact, complexity, autonomy, and the gap to the next level.
4. **Attention to Bias:** The chair will guide members to be mindful of potential biases, such as "similarity bias" (favoring people similar to oneself) or the "halo effect" (letting one strong point overshadow weaknesses).
5. **Consensus Decision:** The meeting aims to reach a consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, a vote is taken. The final outcomes are: "**Promote**," "**Hold** (needs more information)," or "**Do Not Promote**." A detailed rationale must be provided for "Hold" and "Do Not Promote" decisions.

Article 26: Final Approval

The resolutions of the calibration committee will be compiled into a formal report, along with the list of recommended promotions, and presented to the relevant business group head (VP level) and the company CEO for final review and approval. Barring any major concerns, senior leadership will typically respect the professional judgment of the calibration committee.

Part Three: Communication, Appeals, and Follow-Up

Chapter 7: Result Communication & Development Planning

Article 27: Communicating Promotion Results

Communicating the promotion decision is as important as the decision itself.

1. **Communication Principles:**
 - **Delivered personally by the direct manager:** This is a crucial moment for the manager to demonstrate leadership.
 - **Timely and private:** The manager should have a one-on-one private conversation with the employee before any official company announcement.
 - **Candid and specific:** Regardless of the outcome, the communication should be honest, direct, and based on specific feedback from the review process.
2. **Communicating a Successful Promotion:**
 - Express congratulations and affirmation.
 - Reiterate the core reasons for the promotion so the employee understands why they succeeded.
 - Discuss the expectations and challenges of the new role and set up a 30-60-90 day transition plan.
 - Inform the employee about the subsequent process for administrative matters like compensation adjustments.

3. **Promotion Effective Date and Announcement:** All promotions will be announced on the company's internal platform on a designated date to celebrate the growth and achievements of our colleagues.

Article 28: Constructive Feedback and Development Plan for Unsuccessful Promotions

This is the most challenging communication for a manager. Handled well, it can turn disappointment into motivation for future success.

1. **Key Communication Points:**
 - **Acknowledge the employee's effort and disappointment:** Start with empathy.
 - **Clearly communicate the "gap":** Based on feedback from the calibration committee, specifically explain the clear gaps between the employee's performance and the next level. For example: "The committee felt that you need more evidence of independently leading large-scale projects that span across three teams."
 - **Avoid false attribution:** Do not blame the outcome on vague factors like "limited spots" or "bad timing," as this will demotivate the employee.
 - **Reaffirm confidence:** Express confidence in the employee's future development and your support.
2. **Creating a Development Plan:** The focus of the conversation is "looking forward." The manager should work with the employee to create a specific, actionable **"Development Action Plan"** that includes:
 - 1-2 key capabilities to focus on developing over the next 6 months.
 - Specific opportunities and resources the company can provide (e.g., assignment to a more complex project, external training, a mentor).
 - Clear checkpoints and metrics for success.

Chapter 8: Appeal Process

Article 29: Principles and Scope of Appeals

The Company has established a promotion appeal process to address disputes arising from "procedural unfairness," not from "dissatisfaction with the outcome."

- **Grounds for Appeal:**
 - There is clear evidence of discrimination or bias in the promotion process.
 - The promotion process seriously violated the procedures stipulated in this bylaw.
 - The evaluation was based on significant factual errors.
- **Not Grounds for Appeal:**
 - Simply disagreeing with the review committee's judgment of one's impact or capabilities.

Article 30: Appeal Process and Review

1. **Filing an Appeal:** An employee must submit a written appeal with specific evidence to their HR Business Partner within 10 working days of receiving the promotion result notification.

2. **Formation of an Independent Investigation Panel:** The HR department will form an independent panel composed of a senior manager and an HR representative who were not involved in the original decision. The panel will not include anyone from the candidate's direct reporting line or anyone who participated in the original calibration meeting.
3. **Investigation and Deliberation:** The panel will review relevant documents, interview involved parties, and reach a conclusion within 30 days.
4. **Final Decision:** The panel's conclusion will be submitted to the head of HR and the Legal department. Their decision is final. If the appeal is upheld, a special promotion re-review may be initiated with a new review committee.

Part Four: Roles & Responsibilities

Article 31: Employee

- **Proactively** manage their own career development and regularly discuss career goals with their manager.
- Focus on creating **outstanding impact** in their current role, with a clear focus on the scope and complexity of the work.
- Understand the requirements of the target level and consciously seek opportunities to demonstrate those capabilities.
- During the promotion cycle, take responsibility for writing an honest, comprehensive self-assessment and compiling their impact evidence.

Article 32: Direct Manager

- Act as a "**talent coach**," providing continuous, candid feedback and guidance to team members.
- Fairly and accurately assess employee performance and create opportunities for them to demonstrate their abilities.
- During the promotion cycle, write an objective, fact-based nomination and strongly advocate for the candidate in review meetings.
- Regardless of the outcome, take responsibility for communicating the promotion decision in a constructive manner, providing a clear path forward.

Article 33: Mentor

- (An informal role) Provide career advice, share experiences, and help the mentee expand their professional network.
- Can serve as a peer feedback provider, offering a broader perspective on the employee's growth and potential.

Article 34: Peers & Feedback Providers

- Provide **timely, honest, specific, and unbiased** feedback when requested.
- Feedback should be based on direct collaboration experience and observation, not hearsay.
- Respect the confidentiality of the feedback process.

Article 35: Promotion Calibration Committee Members

- Act as "**stewards**" of the Company's talent bar, committed to upholding fairness and consistency in promotion decisions.
- Invest time to thoroughly review promotion packets and actively participate in discussion and debate during meetings.
- Set aside departmental interests and make judgments based on the best interests of the entire Company.

Article 36: HR Business Partner

- Serve as an **advisor and facilitator** of the promotion process, providing policy consultation to managers and employees.
- Help ensure calibration meetings run smoothly, are focused, and are efficient.
- Analyze promotion data to identify potential systemic issues or biases and recommend improvements to leadership.
- Serve as a neutral point of contact for employees with questions or concerns about the process.

Part Five: Special Circumstances & Bylaw Management

Chapter 10: Special Promotion Paths

Article 37: Promotion After an Internal Transfer

After an employee transfers to a new job family or team, it is generally recommended that they work in the new role for at least 12 months before being considered for a promotion nomination. This is to ensure they have had sufficient time to fully demonstrate their impact and capabilities in the new domain. Exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and require clear evidence of impact in the new role.

Article 38: Transitioning Between the IC and Manager Tracks

The Company supports talent mobility between the IC and M tracks.

- **IC to M:** A senior IC who wishes to move into management must first demonstrate their leadership potential by taking on roles like "Tech Lead," mentoring interns, or participating in hiring interviews. The transition typically requires passing additional interviews focused on management competencies, and may include a "Manager-in-Training" period to assess their readiness.
- **M to IC:** The Company also supports managers who wish to return to a hands-on technical role due to personal aspirations. The HR department will assist them in finding a suitable senior IC position. The new level will be reassessed based on their technical skills and impact, which may result in a level change.

Chapter 11: Training & Enablement

Article 39: Manager Training: How to Write an Effective Promotion Nomination

The HR department will offer mandatory training courses for all managers, covering:

- In-depth understanding of career ladders and competency matrices.
- How to identify and document an employee's impactful achievements.

- Techniques for writing a high-quality, STAR-based nomination.
- How to conduct effective promotion conversations (especially for unsuccessful promotions).

Article 40: Committee Member Training: How to Conduct Unbiased Calibration

All members of the Promotion Calibration Committee must attend unconscious bias training before taking office. The training covers:

- Identifying common cognitive biases and their impact on talent decisions.
- How to use structured questioning to challenge potential biases during calibration discussions.
- How to create a psychologically safe environment where all members feel comfortable speaking up.

Article 41: Employee Workshop: Career Paths and Promotion Preparation

The HR department will offer optional workshops for employees to help them:

- Understand the company's promotion philosophy and process.
- Learn how to interpret career ladders and plan their own growth path.
- Master the skills of effectively documenting their achievements and writing a self-assessment narrative.

Chapter 12: Supplementary Provisions

Article 42: Interpretation and Amendment of the Bylaw

The authority to interpret this bylaw rests with the Human Resources & Organizational Development department. This bylaw may be amended by a proposal from the HR department, subject to the approval of the Company's executive management, to adapt to company development and regulatory changes.

Article 43: Effective Date

This bylaw shall take effect on September 1, 2025. All previous related regulations are hereby repealed.

Part Six: Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Career Ladder & Competency Matrix for Software Engineers (Summary)

Level	Title	Scope of Impact	Core Competency: System Design	Core Competency: Leadership

L3	Software Engineer I	Task Level: Completes well-defined coding tasks under guidance. Focus is on mastering a single component or task.	Can understand the design of existing small systems and add features to them. Participates in design discussions for well-scoped projects.	Eager to learn, effectively seeks help, and completes individual tasks. Consistently seeks feedback to improve.
L4	Software Engineer II	Feature Level: Can independently own the end-to-end development of a feature of moderate complexity. Identifies and breaks down a feature into smaller, manageable tasks.	Can design clear, maintainable modules for a new feature. Considers trade-offs between different technical approaches.	Proactively collaborates with team members and demonstrates ownership on small projects. Acts as a subject matter expert for a specific area of the codebase.
L5	Senior Software Engineer	Project Level: Can lead a small group of 2-3 people to complete a medium-sized project from conception to launch. Their work sets a high standard for the team.	Can design medium-sized systems that span multiple services, considering scalability, reliability, and security. Actively participates in cross-team design reviews.	Can mentor junior and mid-level engineers on the team and influence the team's technical decisions. Actively contributes to the team's culture and processes.

L6	Staff Software Engineer	Multi-Project/Team Level: Solves complex technical problems that affect an entire department or multiple teams. Anticipates future technical challenges and proposes solutions.	Can design and build complex, large-scale systems whose decisions have long-term consequences. Drives technical standards and best practices across an organization.	Can set technical direction within a department and lead others through influence rather than authority. Can represent the team's work to senior leadership and external stakeholders.
L7	Principal Software Engineer	Company/Industry Level: As a technical authority, solves the company's most difficult and ambiguous strategic technical problems. Their decisions have a company-wide impact.	Can foresee future technology trends and design architectures that can lead the industry. Influences the company's long-term technical roadmap.	Can mentor senior talent across the company and exert influence in the external tech community on behalf of the company. Regularly gives talks or publishes papers in their field.

Appendix B: "Promotion Packet" Preparation Checklist

For Candidate & Manager:

- **1. Employee Self-Assessment Narrative**
 - ☐ Is it written in the first person?
 - ☐ Does it clearly map to the competency requirements of the target level?
 - ☐ Does it use the STAR/CAR method to describe specific achievements?
 - ☐ Does it include quantifiable results and data?
 - ☐ Has it been reviewed by at least one peer or mentor for feedback?
- **2. Manager's Endorsement**
 - ☐ Does it clearly state the position of support and the core reasons for it?
 - ☐ Does it provide specific examples for each competency evaluation?
 - ☐ Does it honestly identify areas for development?
 - ☐ Does it avoid vague, subjective adjectives?
- **3. Peer & Stakeholder Feedback**

- [] Is the list of reviewers diverse (peers, cross-functional, senior colleagues)?
- [] Have at least 5 reviewers been selected?
- [] Has the final list been agreed upon with the manager?
- [] (Before submission) Have all feedback requests been completed?
- **4. Impact Portfolio**
 - [] Are there links to supporting evidence for every major project mentioned in the narrative?
 - [] Are the links working and are permissions set correctly?
 - [] Is the material clear, easy to understand, and does it quickly prove your contribution?

Appendix C: Peer Feedback Request Template & Guidelines

Subject: Request for Feedback on [Candidate Name]'s Promotion to [Target Title]

To: [Reviewer Name]

Hi [Reviewer Name],

Our colleague, [Candidate Name], is currently being considered for promotion to [Target Title]. As you have worked closely with them on [Project Name or area of collaboration], we would be grateful for your valuable feedback.

Your input is crucial for the promotion review committee to make a fair and well-rounded decision. This process is confidential, and your feedback will not be shared directly with the candidate.

Please answer the following questions based on your direct working experience with [Candidate Name], referencing our company's leadership principles. Please provide specific examples whenever possible.

1. **Impact & Results (Deliver Results):** Please describe one of the most impressive examples of [Candidate Name] leading or making a key contribution to a project that achieved excellent results. How did they overcome challenges to reach their goals?
2. **Teamwork & Leadership (Earn Trust & Hire and Develop the Best):** Please describe [Candidate Name]'s performance in cross-team collaborations. How do they influence others, build consensus, or help team members grow?
3. **Ability to Handle Ambiguity & Complexity (Invent and Simplify & Dive Deep):** Please share an example of how [Candidate Name] tackled an ambiguous or technically complex problem. How did they analyze the situation, propose a solution, and drive it to execution?
4. **Overall Assessment & Development Suggestions:** Overall, do you believe [Candidate Name] has been consistently performing at the level of a [Target Title]? What specific suggestions do you have for their future growth?

Please reply by [Due Date]. Thank you very much for your time and thoughtful feedback.

Best regards,

[Nominating Manager Name]

Appendix D: Promotion Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q1: How long do I need to be in my current role to be considered for promotion?

A1: We do not have a strict "time in role" requirement. The criteria for promotion are based on demonstrated impact and capabilities, not tenure. However, as a general guideline, employees usually need at least 12 months in their current role to gather sufficient evidence to prove they are consistently performing at the next level. The core idea is that sustained, high-level performance is a better indicator of readiness than simply a passage of time.

Q2: What should I do if my manager does not support my promotion?

A2: First, have a candid conversation with your manager to fully understand their concerns and what gaps you need to close. Then, work together to create a clear development plan. If you are at level L5 or above and, after thorough discussion, you still strongly believe you meet the standards, you have the option to self-nominate. A self-nomination is a formal way to initiate a review and is a valuable tool for employees who feel their career progress is being stalled.

Q3: Are there a limited number of "slots" for promotions?

A3: Our promotion philosophy is standards-based, not quota-based. If a candidate is proven to have met the required standards of capability and impact for the next level, they will be promoted. The purpose of calibration meetings is not to control the promotion rate but to ensure the standard is applied consistently across the company. This means that if 10 people meet the standard in a single cycle, all 10 will be promoted. This commitment to a no-quota system ensures that our best talent is always recognized and rewarded, and that the company is always staffed with the talent it needs to succeed.

Q4: How do I know the specific requirements for the next level?

A4: Please refer to the "Career Ladder" and "Competency Matrix" documents for your job family. These documents detail the expectations for each level across various competency dimensions. They are designed to be a living document that serves as your personal roadmap for career growth at Alpha Unlimited. We encourage you to regularly discuss these expectations with your manager and use them as a guide for your personal development plan, ensuring you are always working on projects that will help you build the skills and demonstrate the impact required for the next level.

Q5: Is peer feedback anonymous? Can the candidate see it?

A5: Peer feedback is anonymous to the candidate. The reviewer's name and specific comments are only visible to the members of the promotion review committee and your direct manager to help them make a comprehensive judgment. This is to encourage reviewers to provide more candid and honest feedback. The confidentiality of the feedback process is critical to its effectiveness. While the candidate cannot see the specific feedback, the manager is responsible for summarizing the key themes and takeaways from the feedback during their one-on-one conversation with the employee, ensuring the feedback is acted upon and helps the employee grow.

Q6: How much will my salary increase after a promotion?

A6: A promotion is typically accompanied by an increase in compensation to reflect your expanded responsibilities and impact. The specific adjustment is determined by the compensation department based on your new level, market data, and internal equity principles. Your manager and HR will discuss the details with you during the promotion communication. The compensation adjustment is a direct reflection of the value you bring to the company at your new level, and we are committed to ensuring our compensation is competitive and fair.

Appendix E: Promotion Nomination Form

Candidate Information

- **Full Name:**
- **Current Job Title & Level:**
- **Job Family:**
- **Department:**
- **Proposed New Job Title & Level:**
- **Date of Last Promotion/Role Change:**
- **Date of Last Performance Review:**

Manager's Endorsement & Recommendation

- **Recommendation:** ☐ Promote ☐ Do Not Promote
- **Reasoning for Recommendation (300-500 words):** Please provide a narrative explaining why you believe the candidate is ready for the next level. Use specific examples from their work to demonstrate how they consistently operate at the target level.

Competency Evaluation

- **Universal Competencies:** (Please rate on a scale of 1-5 and provide specific examples)
 - **Ownership:**
 - **Deliver Results:**
 - **Think Big:**
- **Functional Competencies:** (Please rate on a scale of 1-5 and provide specific examples)
 - **[Functional Competency 1]:**
 - **[Functional Competency 2]:**
- **Areas for Development:** (What are the key growth areas for the candidate, even after promotion?)

Supporting Documents

- **Employee Self-Assessment:** (Link to document)
- **Impact Portfolio:** (Link to folder)
- **Peer & Stakeholder Feedback:** (Links to feedback documents, collected by HR)
- **Previous Performance Reviews:** (Links to last two review documents)