The Johari Window

A tool for framing what feedback reveals — Chapter 7

Developed by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram in the 1950s, the Johari Window describes four relationships between what you know about yourself and what others know about you.

	Known to Self	Not Known to Self
Known to Others	**ARENA** Things both you and others know. No gap in awareness. Everyone is working with the same information.	**BLIND SPOT** Things others see about you that you cannot see yourself. This is the quadrant feedback most directly addresses.
Not Known to Others	**HIDDEN** Things you know about yourself that others do not. Professional discretion — but ask whether something is hidden by preference or by fear.	**UNKNOWN** Things neither you nor others currently know. The situation that would reveal them has not arisen yet.

Key reframe: Blind spots are not evidence of inattentiveness. They are an inevitable structural feature of leadership roles. Authority filters honesty. Seniority creates distance. Feedback is the mechanism for addressing it. When feedback reveals something you did not know, that is not a failure. That is evidence that the process is working.

Not knowing a strength is a blind spot too — and those discoveries matter just as much.