INCIDENT 2 I Am Qualified, Why Not Me?
Five years ago, when Bobby Bret joined Crystal Productions as a junior accountant, he felt that he was on his way up. He had just graduated with a
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average from college where he was well liked by his peers and by the faculty, and had been an officer in several student organizations. Bobby had shown a natural ability to get along with people as well as to get things done. He remembered what Roger Friedman, the controller at Crystal, had told him when he was hired, “I think you will do well here, Bobby. You’ve come highly recommended. You are the kind of guy that can expect to move right on up the ladder.”

Bobby felt that he had done a good job at Crystal, and everybody seemed to like him. In addition, his performance appraisals had been excellent. However, after five years he was still a junior accountant. He had applied for two senior accountant positions that had opened, but they were both filled by people hired from outside the firm. When the accounting supervisor’s job came open two years ago, Bobby had not applied. He was surprised when his new boss turned out to be a hotshot graduate of State University whose only experience was three years with a large accounting firm. Bobby had hoped that Ron Greene, a senior accountant he particularly respected, would get the job.

On the fifth anniversary of his employment at Crystal, Bobby decided it was time to do something. He made an appointment with the controller. At that meeting, Bobby explained to Mr. Friedman that he had worked hard to obtain a promotion and shared his frustration about having been in the same job for so long. “Well,” said Mr. Friedman, “you don’t think that you were all that much better qualified than the people that we have hired, do you?” “No,” said Bobby, “but I think I could have handled the senior accountant job. Of course, the people you have hired are doing a great job too.” The controller responded, “We just look at the qualifications of all the applicants for each job, and considering everything, try to make a reasonable decision.”