sshd[902]: debug1:PAM: password authentication failed for an illegal user: Authentication failure

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Troubleshooting PAM authentication failures: Illegal user authentication in SSH

Overview: This article tackles SSH authentication failures due to pam_ldap configuration, specifically addressing errors such as "sshd[902]: debug1:PAM: password authentication failed for an illegal user: Authentication failure." It advises on adjusting /etc/ldap.conf for RFC 2307 mappings, restarting nscd, and verifying LDAP integration using getent passwd and finger commands.

If you are getting the error when you configured pam_ldap for the backend SSH authentication.

Step 1: Ensure to uncomment the following lines in /etc/ldap.conf

```
# RFC 2307 (AD) mappings
nss_map_objectclass posixAccount user
#nss_map_objectclass shadowAccount user
nss_map_attribute uid sAMAccountName
nss_map_attribute homeDirectory unixHomeDirectory
```

Step 2: Restart the nscd service.

```
root@gateway:~# service nscd restart
```

Step 3: The following commands should now return a result from AD/LDAP.

```
root@gateway:~# getent passwd james
james:*:10003:11000:james:/home/james:/usr/local/bin/ezsh

root@gateway:~# finger james
Login: james                    Name: james
Directory: /home/james                  Shell: /usr/local/bin/ezsh
On since Thu Feb  1 14:23 (IST) on pts/1 from 192.168.56.1
   1 hour 47 minutes idle
No mail.
No Plan.
```

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Online URL: https://www.ezeelogin.com/kb/article/sshd902-debug1pam-password-authentication-failed-for-an-illegal-user-authentication-failure-183.html