

9 Ways of Working Barriers Limiting Organizational Capacity

1 Priority Misalignment Individuals and teams are unclear on the highest-value work, so time and effort don't go where they matter most. WARNING SIGNS People stay busy but priorities shift week to week; effort is spread evenly across high and low value work. NEXT STEP Reconfirm the team's top 3 priorities and reallocate time and resources against them.	2 Goal Creep New goals or priorities get added without reassessing whether the team has the capacity or resources to take them on. WARNING SIGNS New goals pile onto existing ones with nothing deprioritized; workload is assumed to stretch without limit. NEXT STEP For every new goal added, identify what resource is added or what existing goal is deprioritized. (See Brian's other PDF)	3 Work Duplication Multiple people, teams, or functions are doing similar work (and duplicating efforts) without realizing it. WARNING SIGNS Overlapping deliverables across teams; confusion over who owns what. NEXT STEP Map ownership of key deliverables and eliminate the overlap.
4 Decision Inefficiency Decisions stall or require more approval layers than the decision actually warrants. WARNING SIGNS Simple decisions need multiple sign-offs; work sits for days awaiting approval. NEXT STEP Identify one decision type that continuously slows the team down. Eliminate unnecessary approval steps and/or shorten the time to what is reasonably required to make the decision.	5 Legacy Policy/Approvals Policies, workflows, or approval steps remain in place long after they've stopped serving a purpose. WARNING SIGNS <i>"That's just how we've always done it"</i> explanations; steps nobody questions even though they are unnecessary and no longer serve the purpose. NEXT STEP Pick one legacy policy and test removing or simplifying it.	6 Process Inefficiency Teams spend time on low-value or repetitive work that could be eliminated, automated, or streamlined. WARNING SIGNS Manual steps that could be automated; repeated work with little added value. NEXT STEP Identify one repetitive task to eliminate, automate, or redesign with AI.
7 Meeting Overload A significant share of time goes to meetings that don't drive clear outcomes and/or that are not needed. WARNING SIGNS Recurring meetings with no clear agenda or decision; attendees who don't need to be there. NEXT STEP Audit recurring meetings and cancel or shorten the ones without a clear purpose.	8 Tech & Tool Friction Systems or tools create more friction than value in day-to-day work. WARNING SIGNS Workarounds, spreadsheets patched onto systems, recurring complaints about a tool. NEXT STEP Identify the tool causing the most friction and explore a fix or replacement.	9 Communication Gaps Breakdowns in communication lead to rework, delays, or confusion. WARNING SIGNS Repeated clarifying questions; work redone due to misalignment. NEXT STEP Identify the handoff creating the most rework or confusion, then establish clear ownership, required information, timing, and a checkpoint to confirm alignment.