Workforce Planning

9 Barriers That Trap Workforce Capacity and Ideas to Address Them

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1 Priority Misalignment

Teams lack clarity on the highest-value work, so time and effort are misdirected.

Warning signs:

Priorities shift frequently; effort is spread 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 are added without reassessing team capacity or resources.

Warning signs:

Goals keep accumulating without anything being deprioritized; capacity is assumed to be unlimited.

Next step:

For each new goal, identify added resources or an existing goal to deprioritize.

3 Work Duplication

Multiple teams or individuals unknowingly duplicate work.

Warning signs:

Overlapping deliverables across teams; confusion over who owns what.

Next step:

Clarify ownership of key deliverables and eliminate overlap.

4 Decision Inefficiency

Decisions stall or require unnecessary approval layers.

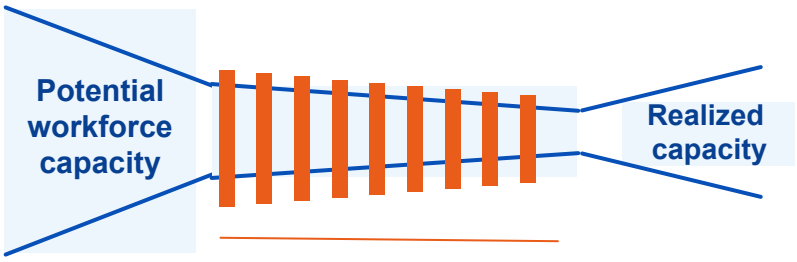
Warning signs:

Simple decisions require multiple sign-offs; work stalls awaiting approval.

Next step:

Identify a recurring decision bottleneck. Remove unnecessary approvals or shorten decision timelines.

Bottlenecks Trap Workforce Capacity



Identify bottlenecks. Remove friction. Unlock capacity.

5 Legacy Policy/Approvals

Outdated policies, workflows, and approvals remain in place despite adding little value.

Warning signs:

"That's how we've always done it"; unnecessary steps go unquestioned.

Next step:

Pick one legacy policy and test removing or simplifying it.

6 Process Inefficiency

Teams spend time on repetitive, low-value work that could be eliminated 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

Too much time goes to meetings that lack clear outcomes or aren't necessary.

Warning signs:

Meetings lack clear agendas or decisions; unnecessary attendees are included.

Next step:

Audit recurring meetings; cancel or shorten those without a clear purpose.

8 Tech & Tool Friction

Systems or tools create more friction than value in day-to-day work.

Warning signs:

Frequent workarounds, disconnected spreadsheets, or recurring tool complaints.

Next step:

Identify the biggest source of tool 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 a problematic handoff. Clarify ownership, information needed, timing, and alignment checks.

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Talent Edge Circle
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