

# Every Team Member Drives Team Productivity

*Underperforming teams overrun budgets and time, increasing business operating costs significantly. They also take a toll on team members on the team and beyond, impacting their on-the-job productivity. Most team models overlook the significant impact that one team member can have on the entire team. This case study illustrates how we assess and address team member productivity and increase team performance results.*

## Project Team Apollo Case Study:

### ***Leading the Transition from Customer Service Agent Support to Self-Service Portal***

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#### **The Situation**

This company of 300 employees provides specialized purchasing services to small businesses, with the branding of “exceptional service, extraordinary people”. The business leader of the customer service and support organization was charged with transitioning customers and employees from customer service agent phone center support to a self-service portal for standard requests.

The business sponsor established the Project Apollo team of six directors to support the transition. While the portal development was on track, employees were concerned about their roles in the newly transitioned environment. Many worried that the transition would negatively impact the customer experience.

The project team had been in place for 3 months when we were first engaged. They had missed several key milestones, jeopardizing the portal launch date scheduled to take place in 90 days.

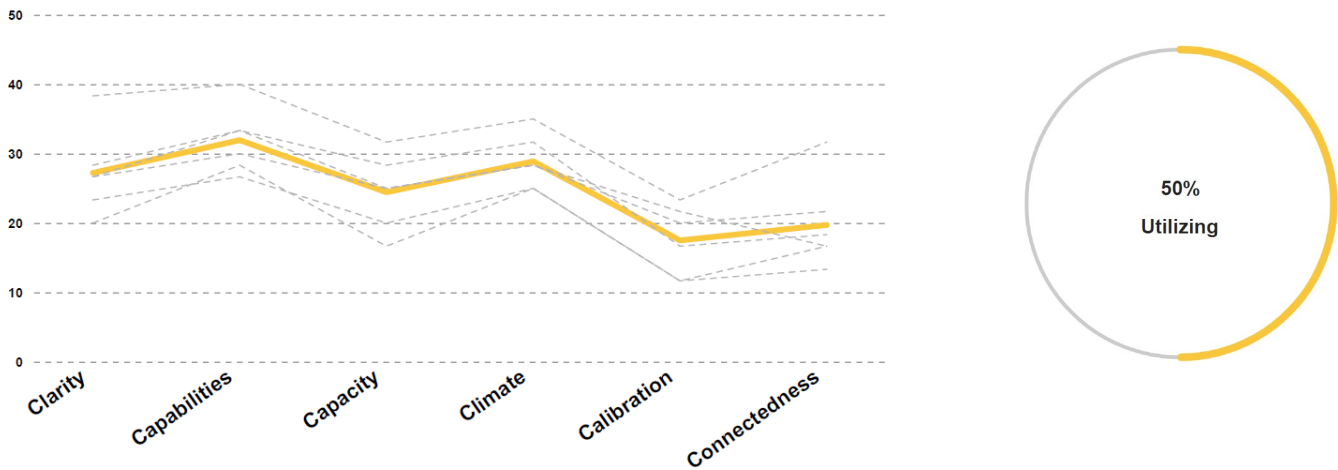
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## **Initial Team Meeting**

We met with the team and introduced our goal of optimizing the productivity of every team member. Team members completed our Talent Optimization Index (TOI) team assessment, a 36-item survey asking team members to describe their experiences of the team’s practices and impact on their personal productivity. We analyzed the survey results, then conducted focus groups and interviews with team members to contextualize the data and turn insights into actions.

## **Team Talent Optimization Assessment Results**

The solid yellow line represents the team’s average score on each of the practices. The dotted lines indicate the scores of each team member.



While the overall Talent Optimization Score of 50% would indicate the team is “ok”, the overall score is artificially inflated due to the high scores of one team member. Understanding where every team member stands provides insights that are easily overlooked by average team scores.

Without addressing the productivity challenges of the other five team members, team productivity would likely continue to decline.

## **What We Did**

The most important practice area to address first was Goal Clarity. Several team members needed more data and facts to understand the benefits to the business and customers that are anticipated with the implementation of the self-service portal.

We conducted a working session with team members, the team sponsor and SMEs from Finance and Technology to review the business case, data, and projected results.

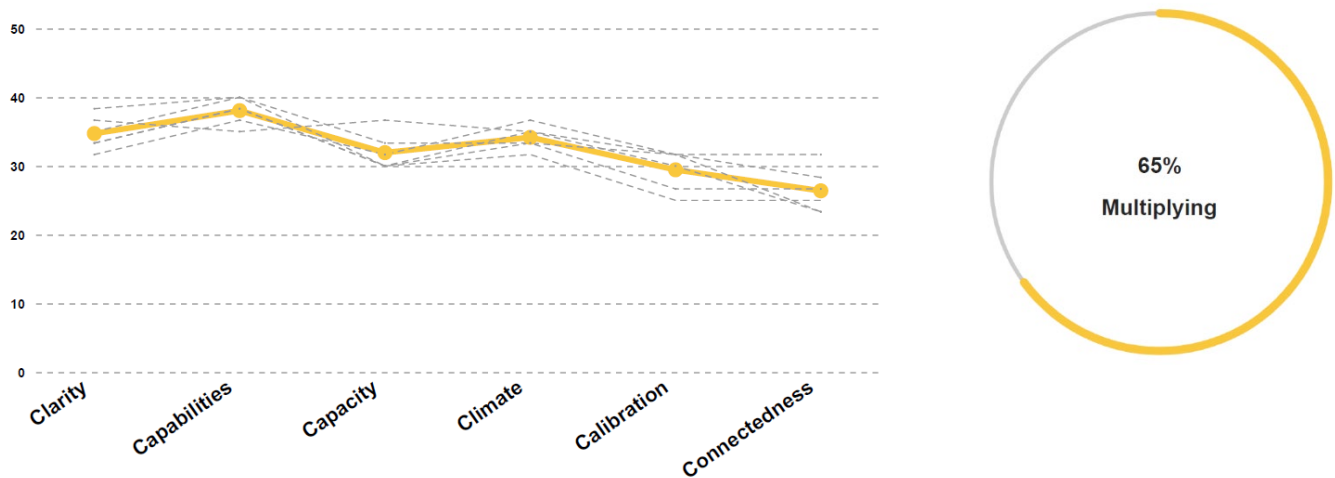
Next, we met with the team to address the lack of a clear roadmap for communication, training, skill building and clearly defined roles for the transition. The team established a sub team to direct the organizational change workstream for employees and for customers.

## What We Did (continued)

We facilitated several weekly calibration meetings to establish the cadence for weekly progress reviews. The organizational change sub team lead attended the weekly reviews. The team sponsor was encouraged to attend the reviews and/or meet with the team leader weekly to proactively identify and address obstacles.

## Post-Assessment Team Results

Five weeks after our initial team assessment we readministered the Talent Optimization Index team assessment. The solid yellow line represents the team's average score on each of the practices. The dotted lines indicate the scores of each team member.



The post-assessment results showed an increase in team productivity of 15%, to 65% overall. Most importantly, all team members' individual productivity scores increased by 10 points.

Initially, the team's talent underutilization costs were calculated at \$145,920 if the team maintained the 50% talent utilization rate throughout the six months. The 15% improvement in talent utilization decreased the underutilization costs to \$76,800.<sup>1</sup>

## Next Steps for the Project Apollo Team

While the Calibration and Connectedness practices showed improvement, continuing to strengthen the weekly calibration meetings and communications within and across interdependent teams will further boost team productivity. The active engagement and support of the team sponsor is critical to overcoming team challenges involving communications and information sharing with other business units, functions, or departments.

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## <sup>1</sup>How We Calculate Talent Underutilization Costs

Our standard for a team that is optimizing the talents and contributions of every team member is the 80% TOI Score. We use this benchmark to calculate the salary costs of talent underutilization. For example, a TOI Score of 50% indicates the team is underutilizing talent by 38%. [ $80\% / 50\% = 62\%$ ]. The Talent Underutilization costs are calculated by estimating the average salary of all team members and the time they dedicate to the team.

This data provides an additional reference point for business leaders in prioritizing team improvement investments. *We recognize team underperformance can have significantly greater costs to the business and we encourage business leaders to consider those factors as well.*

## How we calculated the Project Apollo Team Talent Underutilization Costs

The project team required 6 team members to devote 80% of their time over a period of 26 weeks, an FTE equivalent of 2.4 headcount. The average annual salary of all team members was \$160,000. The total salary costs for the project team = \$384,000.

The TOI score of 50% corresponds to a productivity rate of 62%, a talent underutilization cost of \$145,920. The improved score of 65% corresponds to productivity rate of 80%, decreasing talent underutilization costs to \$76,800.

To learn more about how we can help your teams optimize the talents and productivity of every team member, visit our website at [www.optimizingeverytalent.com](http://www.optimizingeverytalent.com) or email us at [hello@optimizingeverytalent.com](mailto:hello@optimizingeverytalent.com).