Rethinking the Way Your Organization Actually Works

ROB CROSS AND DAVID SYLVESTER
Work doesn’t happen the way you think…
Let me ask a quick question...

In a typical work week, what percent of time (cumulatively) do you spend on the following three activities?

- 20% or less time each week
- 40% or less time each week
- 60% or less time each week
- 80% or less time each week
- 100% or less time each week
- 100+% and ticked off
Ask a neighbor...

On a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent) how effectively is this resource – employee time in collaborative work – managed?

- Track expenses to two decimal places.
- Cost allocations that would befuddle Einstein.
- Budgeting processes consume endless time.
Traditional “lenses” often don’t truly consider the collaborative intensity of work.

Formal design decisions (hierarchy, process, role design and decision-right allocation) create inefficiencies when not considering the collaborative intensity of work.

Talent management processes (on-boarding/mobility, workforce planning, performance management and compensation) create rigidities and silos through uneven collaborative utilization of talent.

Culture is more locally driven than traditional survey methodologies reveal. Overlaying culture scores on networks reveals targeted opportunities to drive cultural change.

Digital strategies driving analytics and collaboration deep into organizations mask inefficiencies created by collaborative overload and decision execution.
Case Study: Vertical Market Segment

Research Question: What are the social network drivers of revenue production?

Revenue producing collaborations

- Visualized revenue producing collaborations by sales bands and where value was being created at different levels within the network

Network alignment

- Identified heavily sought out experts
- Located overloaded people
- Pinpointed collaborative ‘silos’

Talent management and change

- Identified network profiles of top performers and newcomers
- Located natural change agents
## Case Study: Sample Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network (Incoming ties)</th>
<th>Firm Tenure</th>
<th>High Performer</th>
<th>Access Ties (% people who want more access to you)</th>
<th>Energizing Ties (% people who find you energizing)</th>
<th>Cross Account Ties (% of people who reach you from outside the account)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

### Invisible Influencers
Highly influential people that lack formal recognition or support

### Overloaded Performers
High performers, overloaded by incoming demands

### Energizers
People who have disproportionate effects on workplace energy
# Case Study: Results & Recommendations

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<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>INSIGHT</th>
<th>SAMPLE ACTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Improve revenue producing collaboration</td>
<td>Most interactions occur across service teams, but are focused within account/market</td>
<td>• Use network data to identify key individuals that, if linked, could improve cross-selling activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure network alignment</td>
<td>The network is very dependent upon a small group of high level, high-tenured people</td>
<td>• Use network data to connect individuals through job, project, and/or proposal assignments</td>
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</table>
| Improve talent management and change initiatives | High performers and more satisfied employees have larger networks and tend to work across boundaries | • Create profiles of high performing/highly connected individuals and leverage in development and onboarding programs  
• Leverage highly connected, high energy individuals to influence others and/or lead change initiatives |
The five trademarks of agile organizations

**Strategy**... PRACTICES: 1) Shared purpose and vision; 2) Sensing and seizing opportunities; 3) Flexible resource allocation and 4) Actionable strategic guidance.

**Structure**... PRACTICES: 1) Clear/flat structure; 2) Clear/accountable roles; 3) Hands on governance; 4) Robust communities of practice; 5) Active partnership and ecosystem; 6) Open physical and virtual environment and 7) Fit for purpose/accountable cells.

**Process**... PRACTICES: 1) Rapid iteration and experimentation; 2) Standardized ways of working; 3) Performance orientation; 4) Information transparency; 5) Continuous learning; 6) Action-oriented decision-making.

**People**... PRACTICES: 1) Cohesive community; 2) Shared and servant leadership; 3) Entrepreneurial drive and 4) Role mobility.

**Technology**... PRACTICES: 1) Evolving technology architecture, systems and tools; 2) Next-generation technology and delivery practices.
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Agile Trademarks De-Railing Successful Career...

Meet Scott

Imposed Structure
• Role/North Star

Challenged Beliefs
• Identity >> Help

Altered Behaviors
• Pull vs. Push
Scott Didn’t Do All Of These Things...

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Just Three Things Brought Him To His Knees...

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Agility at the four points of execution

Ask yourself if you’re identifying networks’ centers, leveraging their edges, bridging silos together, and making external connections.
Network De-Railers

**INTERNAL**

- Hub and spoke
- Overwhelmed

**EXTERNAL**

- Dis-enfranchised
- Divided

- Isolated from Environment
- Priority Overload
• Time spent in collaborative activities – on the phone, on email or in meetings – has exploded over the past decade. Yet, traditional organizational paradigms remain overly focused with individual employees and tasks.
Liquid Workforce?

Talent Mobility?

If people were atoms why do
transitions fail so often…

Chasing Stars
The Myth of Talent and the Portability of Performance

BORIS GROYSBERG
Rapid and effective personal network development is critical to transitions

**Entry:** 3-5 years. Create pull. Influencers not boss.

**Lateral:** Skill gaps and engage opinion leaders.

**Promotion:** Manage overload/enterprise net.

**Role shift:** Envision and re-invent.
Making meaningful connections for new hires

- Identify key strategies to drive peak performance through social networks
- Recognize how high performers efficiently build social networks
- Create effective social networks while avoiding collaborative overload
Connecting with purpose is based on five dimensions of effective networking and includes leadership-specific content.

**Module 1**  
*In Person*  
(2 hours 15 minutes)  
- Driving performance through organizational networks  
- **Overload Diagnostic**  
- **HBR Reducing Collaborative Overload**  

**Module 2**  
*In Person*  
(1 hour)  
- Collaborative Overload  

**Module 3**  
*In Person / Virtual*  
(1 hour)  
- Purpose, Energy & Trust  
- Connections Diagnostic
200+% greater likelihood of turnover in 2-4 year tenure band for employees of overloaded leaders...

HBR Blog: The Best Way to Network In a New Job
Re-calibrate networks and collaborative practices for long-term performance and well-being/engagement in work.

Build purpose and create network efficiency.

Jumpstart productivity and inclusion through connections that yield influence without authority, address skill gaps and magnify capability.

Broad network early stage problem solving.

Connect in ways that energize others, build rapid trust and create pull into important projects and streams of work.

Create pull versus push.
Principle
Integrate rapidly by day 60-90. Build relational
locations and perspectives with people in ways that
help the work and the change.

Core Strategies
1. Identify people in 5-10 stakeholder/evens of
or support roles; 4)
2. Set a meeting schedule that aligns with
and needs—not for a
3. Tailor interactions to prefer to work, offer
4. Support functions and people you
will need to rely on in the future. You wait until you
have a request or need before you learn who might
help and how to work with them.
5. Expect your manager or other formal leader to
make the introductions you need to do the job. You
rely on others to be the go-between if you are required
to reach outside of your team or group.
6. Ask questions about what, not who. You prioritize
the goal or task, without understanding who else might
be a resource or affected by your work.
7. Have limited information about the goals and
aspirations of stakeholders (internal or external
customers or groups impacted by what you do).

To learn more about this practice and read case studies,
use QR code or visit
www.connectedcommons.com/
transitions/lesson-1/
BUILD A DIVERSIFIED NETWORK ON ENTRY
To be effective, your network does not need to be big or consume a lot of time. Rather, networks of high performers are diversified across expertise domains, functions and levels. Such networks create the path to future opportunities and allow for effective transitions into new roles.

Make network development a priority in the first 60-90 days in a new organization, function or team. Review the five categories below and consider where you need to initiate, revitalize or strengthen relationships. In the columns on the right, list names of people you need to meet. If you don’t know a specific person, write down the group or function. Use this list to set meetings or ask for introductions.

**WHO TO CONNECT WITH EARLY ON**

- **Key stakeholders and customers/clients:** Seek to understand their context, projects and current needs to gain a broad view of challenges and opportunities. Ask how they can make their work easier. Co-create potential solutions for buy-in and look to execute an early, mutual win.

- **Formal leaders—and their trusted deputies.** Get up to speed on key leaders’ goals, motivations and interests to understand the business and political context they govern your team can help. Then, find out who they rely on (i.e., chief of staff, go-to manager, administrator). This allows you to gain insight and execute work while respecting the leaders’ time.

- **Colleagues in functional and support roles.** Set up meetings with key people who will support your work before you have a need—this smooths execution and generates goodwill. Focus on their range of responsibility/report and how they operate. Ask how best to engage them when needed and what they need from you.

- **Peers, direct reports, and external experts.** Take time to get to know people personally, including their interests, capabilities and aspirations, as a starting point for building trust. Focus on better understanding what people currently do, what they want to do and who they are connected to within the team and in other parts of the business.

**LIST NAMES, GROUPS OR EXPERTISE TO REACH OUT TO**

**NETWORK TIPS**

- **Ask your new manager for a list of people in the above categories that you should build relationships with.** Do this quickly—even before you start the job—to leverage the benefit of being new. Include immediate team members and anybody you need to rely on to get work done.

- **Ask for referrals to people you should know who are important to your work.** When you meet with people, always ask who else you should speak with. This often will get you to a small handful of people that will matter for your work and help you build legitimacy.

- **Be sure to build relationships before you need something.** People are more likely to help—or go out of their way for you—if you have established a connection.
Time spent in collaborative activities – on the phone, on email or in meetings – has exploded over the past decade. Yet, traditional organizational paradigms remain overly focused with individual employees and tasks.
On a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent) how effectively is this resource (employee time in collaborative work) managed?

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