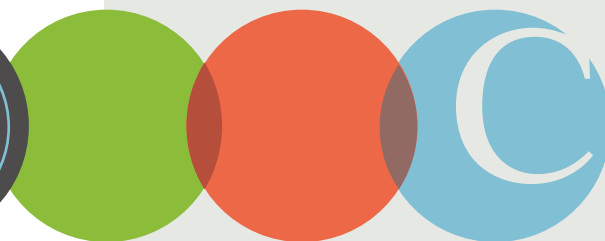


The leadership periodical for a brighter world: filled with practical business guidance and strategic insights that merge humanity back into the workplace, helping drive sustainable growth for leaders, teams, and the organizations they serve.



**A SEA CHANGE IS UPON US
HAS YOUR ORGANIZATION
CHARTED A NEW COURSE?**

2017 Volume 1



ORGANIZATION
Catalyst

KEEPING IT REAL: REFLECTIONS ON THE TRUE COST OF BUSINESS AS USUAL



NAVIGATING THE ATTENTION ECONOMY
The high cost of overwhelm & the immutable myth of multi-tasking
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“Insanity : doing the same thing over & over and expecting different results.” ~ Albert Einstein

Contemporary business has created sensational progress & value for humanity in recent history, and yet there is a preponderance of evidence that the way we currently run organizations is stretched to the limits. In this issue of Catalyst, we dare to take an objective look at some of the more undeniable riffs in today’s organization productivity.

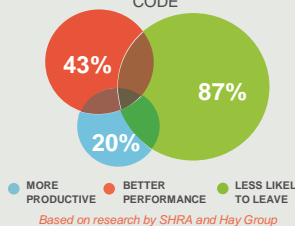
Engagement, which we know instinctively deserves our attention, has not changed materially in the last five years, despite volumes of fret, organization focus and \$720M annual investment. On average in the U.S., a stunning 70% of employees are still disengaged. Why haven’t we gained more traction? What is the key to unlocking personal and professional commitment at

work? Similarly, even with a \$170B annual investment in leadership development, many firms claim that leadership capacity in their organization is not keeping up with demand. Is it content, content delivery, or the culture that leaders return to when classes end that affect this outcome? Or even more likely a

tangled combination of these? How will we update our leadership development model to more effectively address business needs?

There is an unprecedented level of responsibility falling on the shoulders of young & experienced leaders alike, with more lean and matrixed global organizations; centralization of support functions (which invariably increases individual ownership);

BUSINESS BENEFITS OF CRACKING THE ENGAGEMENT & COMMITMENT CODE



Continued on page 2

ambitious strategic and tactical agendas that often interfere with intentions to invest time & energy in ongoing development; and the overwhelm that invades the space where critical thinking resides. Our least experienced leaders, first-line managers, make up roughly 50% of management and lead 80% of the workforce, yet on the job coaching and mentoring— proven to enable the adaptive capabilities that are the most relevant skills of today— are rarely scalable at the middle and senior levels.

It's been said that people join companies, and leave their leaders. With the cost of turnover conservatively ranging on a salary basis from 20% - 200% per hire, or \$11B annually; with our churning efforts around Engagement; with the clear & present shortcomings of legacy training approaches... can we afford to ignore the signs that are asking us to change course?

If we were rewarded for effort, we'd surely get high scores. But it is results that organizations want and need, that shareholders expect. And by many measures, we owe a commitment of improvement to those who invest their careers in the prosperity of business.

It is the beginning of a new calendar year, so let's steep in the energy of starting anew. Charting a new course requires us to not only know our destination, but also to know well from where we start. It is acknowledging the honest distance between the two, the courage to plot or update a course that accounts for the forces of the prevailing environment, and our willingness to stay the course that ultimately informs success.

And so we begin again-



NAVIGATING THE ATTENTION ECONOMY

THE PARADOX OF OVERWHELM

Organizational A.D.D. is a pressing contemporary issue, fueled by the relentless stream of 21st century information, complex economies & competing business priorities, and exacerbated by an acutely well-established addiction to multi-tasking. Often, we are too busy to even recognize that we are too busy for our own good.

When the mind is under pressure, bombarded by information and distractions, it is almost impossible to prioritize the critical few ahead of the trivial many. We don't have access to the part of our brain that is responsible for executive function, critical thinking, and creative problem solving, because we are hijacked by more primitive tactical functioning. In that frame of mind, it is natural to choose the most comfortable task, the most familiar transaction, or even take action that actively distracts us from our own concern about getting it all done. Enter the acts of administering our inbox, or consulting social media. True, that.

The paradox of overwhelm is that it creates behaviors that lead to less productivity and greater overwhelm. Focusing on trying to get out of overwhelm only makes it worse.

THE COST OF MULTITASKING

So what do we do? A 'solution' we have learned to lean on is this thing called multitasking. But here's what we need to know about multitasking: it is a misnomer. The truth is, we can only focus on one thing at a time. Yes, we can hold multiple concurrent priorities, and we can only engage with one of them at any given point in time.

A more appropriate language for the condition of tending simultaneously to multiple works-in-progress is perhaps context- or task- switching. And make no mistake, it comes with a price.

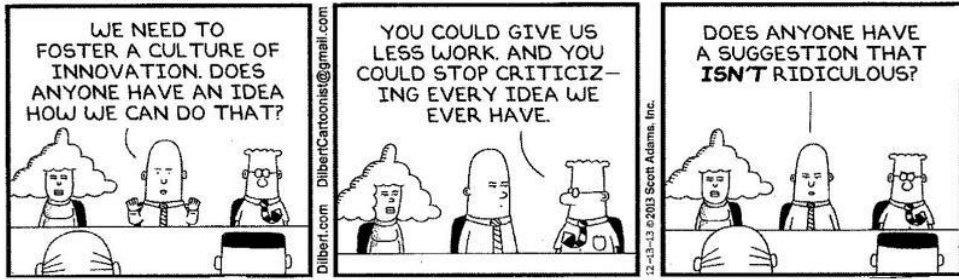
# Projects at One Time	% Time Worked per Project	% Time Lost to Context Switching
1 Project	100%	0%
2 Projects	40%	20%
3 Projects	20%	40%
4 Projects	10%	60%
5 Projects	4%	80%

It is the most courageous act of leadership to choose the critical few and drive focus within and across the organization, or staff & skill up to build capacity for more aggressive agendas. Not in a Polyanna way, but in a way that honors the most important deliverables that each company has declared as levers of their success.

What would a 20%+ efficiency improvement do for your organization's bottom line? ●



Dilbert By Scott Adams



BEST PRACTICES IN INNOVATION

Innovation is a way that organizations express their evolution: through the introduction of new products & services, and improvement of internal & external partnerships and processes. Whether incremental or disruptive, the vast majority of organizations can't rely on innovation that comes from an ivory tower or sequestered & secret think-tank. They rely on innovation at the point closest to the need, via the insight & initiative of each employee.

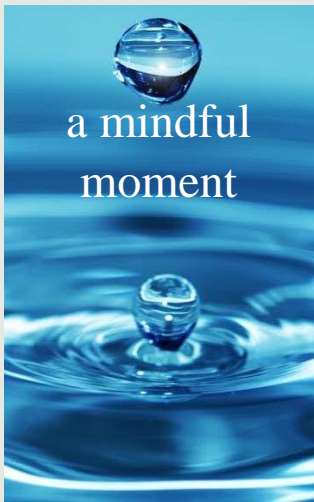
A key ingredient for successful innovation is collaboration: in addition to the known merits of brainstorming and building on the seeds of inspiration that come from other people, long

gone are the new products, roles, partnerships and process improvements that can be introduced without broad or at least integrated business implications.

It turns out that the birthplace of collaboration is an environment of trust. Not in an intellectual concept of trust, but in the experience of it, living and breathing in & through the myriad of relationships that make up the enterprise.

You may have heard the saying that actions speak louder than words; yet in the case of trust, actions and words work in concert to fortify (or hinder) the neurochemical cocktails

Continued on page 4



Self-awareness is a foundational competency of leadership success. In fact, it is THE prior condition to all acts of growth and advancement. The way to cultivate self-awareness is through mindfulness, which is simply the capacity to notice. It might not be easy, but it is simple & practice helps. Everyone can learn to access it. A doorway to mindfulness is the breath, and you can take this mindful moment with you everywhere you go: three deep breaths can change your life.

To create space for your best thinking to emerge, no matter what is happening around you-- simply inhale while silently counting to 4, hold the inhale for a count of 4, then exhale as you count to 4. Repeat two more times. Then pause to notice your capacity to be more present. ●

4 IN DEMAND: TOP TALENT CAPABILITIES

While talents that distinguish today's top leaders can be learned, they are not well suited to traditional classroom training. These are adaptive skills that integrate and build with experience. Any L&D strategy for these skills should include applied & measured integration over time with regular feedback, ideally in a coaching style.

1 HOLD A BROADER PERSPECTIVE
Silos are so yesterday. Leadership is no longer about individual best. Today's top talent needs broad business acumen and the capacity to facilitate and influence best business outcomes across departments, geographies, strategies & more.

2 DEVELOP & RETAIN GREAT TALENT
Connecting and relating to individual aspirations and strengths is the order of today. One-size approaches are not working in the multi-generational workforce that expects development and individualized support.

3 TRANSCEND INFORMATION OVERLOAD
Top talent can create focus on the critical few vs the trivial many, delegate responsibly & coach for success. This capability requires keen discernment, presence under pressure and understanding of the strategic landscape.

4 RESPONSIVE TO CHANGE (vs ADAPTIVE)
The rate of change in the world and in business is unprecedented, with no slowdown in sight. Top talent is resilient and capable of navigating change with perspective, contributing to the organization's forward trajectory while change is under way. ●

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT WITH 700% ROI

According to a Global Coaching Client Study by International Coach Federation, the coaching industry's global accrediting body, 86% of companies providing ROI data reported at least recouping their initial coaching investment; 19% enjoyed an ROI of

at least 50 times their investment (5000%), while another 28% saw an ROI of 10 to 49 times the initial investment. "The median company return was 700%."

Is it time for you to consider coaching as part of your talent development strategy? ●



“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

~ Warren Bennis

Best Practices in Innovation, continued from page 3

that are released with every interpersonal interaction. We are wired for connection, and healthy open forums of sharing and discovery expand the platform for trust and lead to higher levels of productive, supportive and innovative conversations at work and at home. Trust also cultivates resilience in times of change and challenge.

If you are not observing trusting, open, honest dialog in your organization, between all people at all levels, with conversational skills that enable productive & caring disagreement and conflict resolution, as well as creative thinking and authentic engagement, chances are good that innovation is slow, stagnant, or somehow suffering too. It's a package deal.

How do you begin to instill the experience of trust in your organization? There is much to know about how to properly navigate this territory, and I will write more about it in future issues of Organization Catalyst. You begin by listening with the express purpose of connecting to the person in front of you. Listen. Get curious about their perspective and don't judge it. Rather than lead the witness, ask questions for which you have no answers. Listen. And stay tuned for more... ●

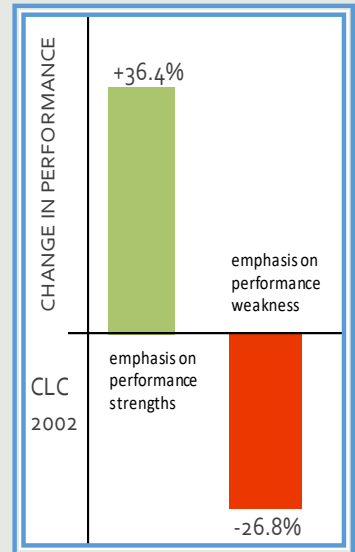


THE PRODUCTIVITY OF POSITIVE SCHOLARSHIP

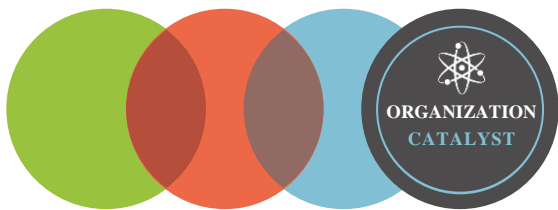
Gap-based performance conversations have been shown to actually decrease levels of performance; where strength-based conversations generate productivity.* It's not about 'making nice,' sugar coating the truth, or avoiding conversations about things that do need to improve. Striking the right balance between the two during a review is the purview of positive leadership. It's about celebrating and building on what others are naturally good at. Employees & leaders who are mobilized around strengths have happier customers, more engaged teams, greater resilience, greater adaptability to change, and sustained high performance, to name a few favorable outcomes.

What's not to like? ●

Positivity – an attitude & skill that's good for the bottom line



* CLC, UK 2002 19K+ participants



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