

TASK ALIGNMENT

A powerful method to improve
productivity and employee morale.
Only from



Do your professional employees complain about having to do too much lower level work? It is possible to improve productivity and employee satisfaction at the same time. Does this sound too good to be true? It's not.

A Task Alignment quickly identifies opportunities to reassign work and/or to outsource it.

It helps managers understand how employee time is currently being used and how to optimize the alignment of work in roles.

It can significantly reduce expenses and result in improvements to both the efficiency and effectiveness of your organization.

In most organizations, there are two levels of work being performed by roles below the middle management level. The first level is usually focused on the delivery of products or services to the customer. The second level is mostly focused on more complex, problem-solving work related to the delivery of these products or services.

LOWER LEVEL WORK

Example roles:

Quality Assurance Technician
Transactional Sales
Programmer
Accounting Analyst
Maintenance Technician

HIGHER LEVEL WORK

Example roles:

Quality Assurance Professional
Relationship Sales
Systems Analyst
Certified Accountant
Engineer

These roles are usually designed to perform tasks that focus on one level of work or the other. The reason is simple: different levels of work require different levels of capability. For example, the tasks involved in delivering high quality customer service do not require the same level of capability as managing, identifying and resolving issues related to that delivery.

Our research shows, however, that tasks are very often not aligned to the right level of role. In fact, higher level employees are doing too much lower level work, and lower level employees are doing too much higher level work. The opportunity cost of such misalignment is often substantial.

What the Research Tells Us

1 Organizations are overpaying for lower level work

In a study of nine organizations, Capelle Associates found that higher level employees are spending nearly half of their time doing lower level work (Figure 1). To the extent that this occurs, an organization is paying an unnecessary premium to get the lower level of work done.

It should also be noted that higher level employees frequently lack the technical skills required to perform certain lower level tasks. The quality of the work output is therefore put at risk while money is being wasted.

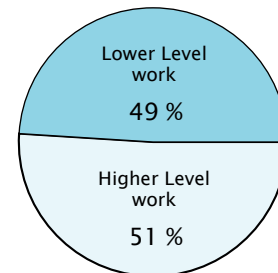


Figure 1
Type of work performed by higher level employees

2 Organizations are putting customer delivery at risk

Roles at the front line need to stay focused on product or service delivery. But our research reveals that front line employees are spending 17% of their time doing work that belongs in a higher level role (Figure 2).

Giving employees in these roles higher level tasks they may not be capable of doing prevents them from effectively meeting customer demands. They will also not be able to be successful in performing their roles.

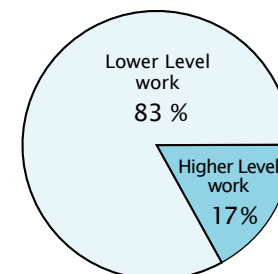


Figure 2
Type of work performed by lower level employees

3 Employee satisfaction is being compromised

Individuals with the capability to do higher level work will become frustrated and bored if given too much lower level work to do. When lower level employees are given unrealistic expectations, they may not succeed and are also likely to become frustrated.

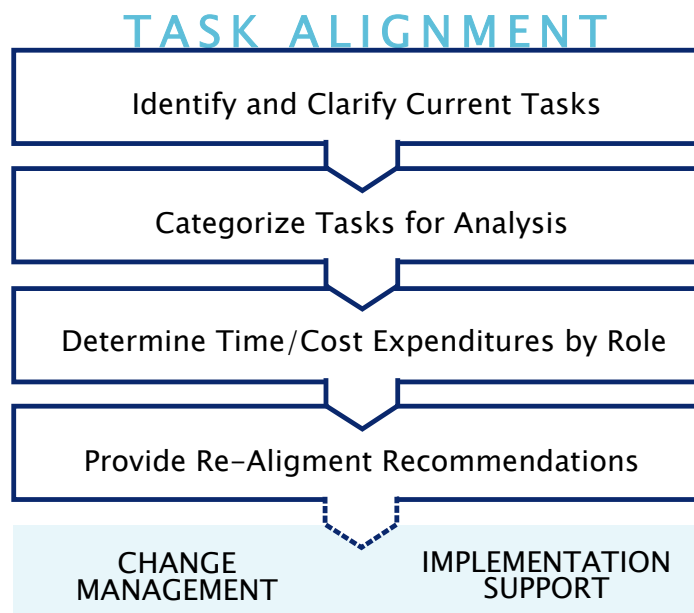
In short, the alignment of work is critical not only to productivity, but also to morale. When work is not properly aligned, very real issues emerge concerning employee satisfaction. And when employee satisfaction is compromised, customer satisfaction can decrease, which in turn negatively impacts overall financial performance.

The Task Alignment Solution

To address the issues identified in the research, you should start by examining the individual tasks your employees are performing. Most methods for studying roles at a granular level, 'time and motion' studies and the like, tend to be very intrusive and can potentially grind work to a halt. They tend to require long periods of time to complete, and employee satisfaction is often compromised for cost reductions. Task Alignment is not one of these methods.

You will quickly uncover alignment issues and identify opportunities for improvement while your business is minimally impacted. While minimally intrusive, it is still an inclusive process. Involving your employees in the Task Alignment strengthens the reliability of the findings, provides a wealth of perspectives for the realignment process, and helps ensure that any resulting change is both accepted and understood.

While every project is customized to meet specific client needs, a typical Task Alignment follows the high-level process outlined below.



When embarking on a Task Alignment, you can be assured that our consultants will add value throughout the process. Once complete, we also offer our expertise and assistance with implementation. Our consultants will

- > Provide the methodology, analysis, and judgement from an external perspective
- > Provide the insight required to fully realize the potential value of our recommendations
- > Assist with the organization design work associated with implementing the recommendations
- > Provide expertise and assistance with the change management associated with implementation

A High-Yield Investment

Undertaking a Task Alignment has proven to be a solid human capital investment for our clients. The actual return on a specific client's investment in a Task Alignment depends on a number of factors:

- the size of the organization,
- the nature of the work,
- the current alignment of work,
- the number of roles and positions, and
- compensation levels.

On average, potential first year savings for a Task Alignment is 16 times the investment in the project (Figure 3). This translates into savings of approximately \$12,000 for each higher-level position included in the Task Alignment project.

The ROI figures are based solely on the savings associated with optimally aligning work and not having higher level (and higher paid) employees doing excessive amounts of lower level work, reducing the premium pay for lower level work. Additional ROI can be expected through increasing the effectiveness of the organization and the quality of the work output.

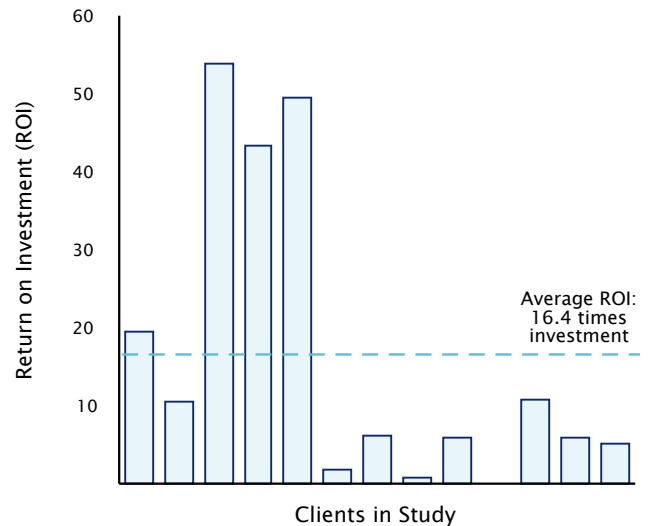


Figure 3
Average Return on Investment

"[Capelle Associates'] approach is powerful as it provides senior executives with a more comprehensive framework for aligning strategy, roles, accountabilities and tasks in complex situations. This work has formed the basis of a program to progressively lower our costs for doing work while ensuring that our IT personnel truly perform the type of tasks that they value, find rewarding and appropriate for their role."

Ted Carter, Vice President Information Technology, Allstate Canada Group

"The benefits were immediate. From the business perspective, the outputs helped us drive efficiencies with our people and our processes. It also laid the groundwork and gives us an understanding that will help us to realize more efficiencies in the future."

Robert Sinclair, Vice President, Broker Services BMO Bank of Montreal

Capelle Associates is the only firm to offer this proprietary Task Alignment method. We have over 25 years of experience in helping executives improve organization performance.

Contact us now to discuss how we can help you achieve your business goals.



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