

Identifying and Addressing Work Imbalances Within Your Team

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Let's start with what we already know

Raise your hand if you have ever...

HEARD

"I have too much work."

WONDERED

**Is it workload, process,
priorities, or training?**

ABSORBED

**More work because a role
was not replaced?**

This is a conversation, not a lecture.

What work imbalance is, and what it is not

Work imbalance can look like...

- Uneven effort or complexity
- Chronic overtime for a few people
- Underused skills or capacity
- Work concentrated with one expert
- Unplanned work crowding out priorities

Work balance does not mean...

- Everyone has the same task count
- Every task is interchangeable
- High performers absorb every urgent need
- Leaders wait until someone asks for help
- A busy team is automatically a fair team

Fair does not always mean equal. Fair means visible, intentional, and sustainable.

When the workload is visibly out of balance



What would you investigate before moving work from one side to the other?

The signals appear before the crisis

Operational

- Missed deadlines
- Declining quality
- Growing backlog

Behavioral

- Reduced engagement
- Increased frustration
- Less participation

Capacity

- Consistent overtime
- Uneven availability
- PTO feels impossible

Attendance

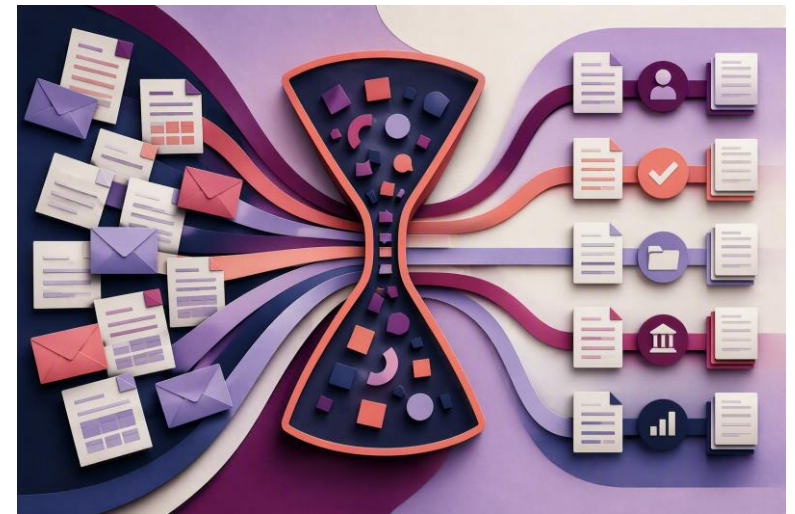
- Unscheduled absences
- Frequent coverage gaps

Employee voice

- Repeated comments about exhaustion, pressure, or being overwhelmed

AP tells us when the load is uneven

- Aged exceptions concentrated with one person
- Supplier escalations and service interruption notices
- Inbox ownership repeatedly falling to the same employee
- Uneven invoice, payment, or statement volumes
- Month-end work dependent on one subject-matter expert
- Tasks stop when one person is unavailable



If the work stops when one person is absent, you have a workload issue and a continuity risk.

Root causes live in the system

Work design

- Poor allocation
- Unclear ownership
- Manual or duplicate steps
- Complex work hidden

Organizational pressure

- Staffing limitations
- Changing demands
- Competing priorities
- Constant change

Leadership visibility

- New work added without reprioritizing
- Weak boundaries
- Unclear expectations
- Limited capacity data

Work imbalance is not automatically an employee performance problem.

Measure the work, not the person

Capacity What time is truly available?

Complexity How much judgment, research, and follow-up is required?

Capability What experience or training is needed?

Risk What happens if this work is late or incorrect?

Rework Where are errors or handoffs adding effort?

Use time studies when processes, volumes, systems, or responsibilities change.

From competing work to clear priorities



Which work stream would you make visible first?

Make the invisible work visible



If new work comes in, leaders must decide what moves, what waits, or what stops.

Common leadership traps



Reward strong employees with every urgent assignment



Redistribute tasks without removing existing work



Assume equal task counts mean equal workloads



Wait for employees to ask for help



Treat every symptom as a performance problem



Add automation without fixing the underlying process

Busyness is not the same as value, and capacity is not the same as commitment.

Rebalance without blame

- 1 **Make it visible:** Review volumes, complexity, backlog, and interruptions.
- 2 **Ask before assuming:** What is taking time? What is unclear? What keeps returning?
- 3 **Reset priorities:** Clarify what must be done now, later, differently, or not at all.
- 4 **Share capability:** Cross-train, rotate, document, and reduce single points of failure.
- 5 **Review the result:** Did the change improve service, quality, and sustainability?

Illustrative AP scenario

Problem

One analyst owns most exceptions and repeatedly stays late.

What the data showed

Complexity and inbox interruptions were concentrated, while other capacity was available.

Actions

Rebalanced ownership, rotated triage, clarified escalation rules, and cross-trained support.

Measures to watch

Aged exceptions, cycle time, overtime, rework, supplier escalations, and employee feedback.

The goal is not a one-time redistribution. The goal is a healthier operating model.

Turning competing work into clear priorities



What should leaders make visible before deciding what moves, waits, or stops?

A 30-60-90 day path

FIRST 30 DAYS UNDERSTAND

- Map planned and unplanned work
- Review volume, backlog, and aging
- Listen to employee feedback
- Identify single points of failure

DAYS 31–60 REBALANCE

- Clarify priorities and ownership
- Redistribute work intentionally
- Begin cross-training
- Remove unnecessary steps

DAYS 61–90 SUSTAIN

- Track results and adjust
- Standardize intake and escalation
- Update SLAs and expectations
- Establish a recurring workload review

Your Three Actionable Takeaways

Make the work visible. Lead with curiosity. Rebalance before the team reaches a breaking point.

1

MAKE IT VISIBLE

Create a shared view of demand, capacity, blockers, and unplanned work.

2

ASK BEFORE ASSUMING

Separate workload, process, training, and performance questions.

3

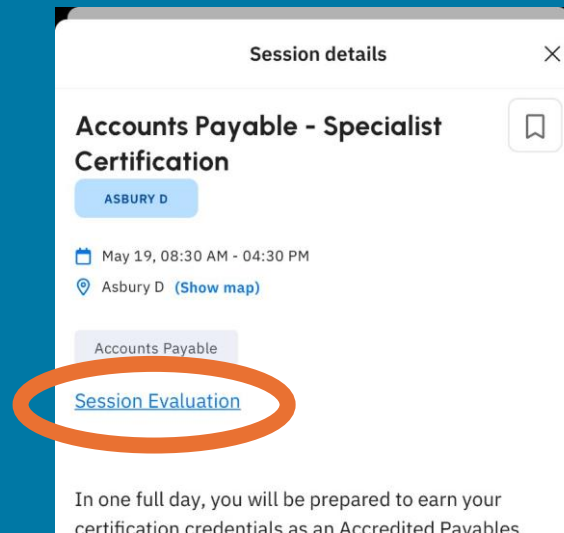
REBALANCE EARLY

Do not wait for burnout, turnover, or service failure to become the signal.

Before you leave: Write down one conversation or decision you will make within the next seven days.

Please tell us what you think!

- Please scan this QR code using your mobile to access a short feedback survey →
- Also accessible via the mobile app



QUESTIONS?

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Connect with me on LinkedIn for continued conversations on leadership, workload management and process improvement

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