Capability System Assessment™

Companion to Becoming a Catalyst | John Coné

Catalyst Capability System Assessment – Companion Guide

Each dimension is rated High, Moderate, or Low. Use the behavioral anchors as guides rather than rigid rules.

Infrastructure

Dimension	Definition	High	Moderate	Low
Shared Language	A common vocabulary for the capability so people describe, discuss, and reinforce it consistently.	Most people use the same language naturally.	Some common terms exist but are used inconsistently.	People describe the capability in very different ways.
Processes	Repeatable workflows that support the capability.	Capability is embedded in normal work.	Some supporting processes exist.	No repeatable process supports the capability.
Technology	Tools that enable the capability.	Technology actively enables and accelerates.	Technology supports some aspects.	Technology is absent or a barrier.
Resources	People, time and budget devoted to the capability.	Resources are consistently available.	Resources are intermittent.	Resources are largely unavailable.
Measures	Indicators that show capability growth.	Capability is measured and reviewed.	Some measures exist.	Little or no meaningful measurement.

Experiences

Dimension	Definition	High	Moderate	Low
Stretch Assignments	Meaningful work that develops capability.	Common and intentional.	Occasional.	Rare.
Coaching	Guided feedback that accelerates growth.	Regular and high quality.	Inconsistent.	Little coaching.
Communities	Peer learning and practice sharing.	Active communities.	Some informal sharing.	Little community learning.
Reflection	Structured learning from experience.	Routine.	Occasional.	Rare.
Knowledge Sharing	Movement of insight across boundaries.	Knowledge flows freely.	Some sharing.	Knowledge remains siloed.
Experimentation	Safe testing of new ideas.	Frequent learning experiments.	Occasional.	Avoided.

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Conditions

Dimension	Definition	High	Moderate	Low
Trust	Confidence in one another.	High trust.	Mixed.	Low trust.
Psychological Safety	Freedom to speak up.	People challenge ideas openly.	Sometimes.	People stay silent.
Curiosity	Questions and exploration are valued.	Highly curious.	Mixed.	Little curiosity.
Leadership Support	Visible sponsorship.	Consistent.	Uneven.	Minimal.
Recognition	Capability-building is acknowledged.	Regularly recognized.	Sometimes.	Rarely recognized.
Time	Protected time to learn.	Adequate.	Limited.	None.
Collaboration	Working across boundaries.	Routine.	Inconsistent.	Siloed.

Catalyst Capability System Assessment – Working Instrument

Rate each dimension, explain your reasoning, record evidence, identify priority, and suggest one improvement.

Dimension	Rating H/M/L	Evidence / Rationale	Priority H/M/L	Suggested Improvement	Owner / Next Step
Infrastructure					
• Shared Language					
• Processes					
• Technology					
• Resources					

Dimension	Rating H/M/L	Evidence / Rationale	Priority H/M/L	Suggested Improvement	Owner / Next Step
• Measures					
Experiences					
• Stretch Assignments					
• Coaching					
• Communities					
• Reflection					
• Knowledge Sharing					
• Experimentation					
Conditions					
• Trust					

Dimension	Rating H/M/L	Evidence / Rationale	Priority H/M/L	Suggested Improvement	Owner / Next Step
• Psychological Safety					
• Curiosity					
• Leadership Support					
• Recognition					
• Time					
• Collaboration					

Example Completed Catalyst Capability System Assessment

Illustrative example for a global manufacturing company seeking to strengthen customer-centric innovation.

Dimension	Rating	Evidence / Rationale	Priority	Suggested Improvement	Owner
Shared Language	Moderate	Different functions describe the capability differently.	High	Create a common capability glossary.	CTO
Processes	Moderate	Capability reviews are inconsistent.	Medium	Embed reviews into quarterly business reviews.	HR
Technology	High	Knowledge platform and AI search are widely used.	Low	Expand usage analytics.	HRIS
Resources	Moderate	Funding exists but coaches are limited.	High	Develop internal capability coaches.	L&D

Dimension	Rating	Evidence / Rationale	Priority	Suggested Improvement	Owner
Measures	Low	Training is measured; capability growth is not.	High	Create capability indicators.	People Analytics
Stretch Assignments	Moderate	Available only for high-potentials.	Medium	Broaden access.	Business
Coaching	Moderate	Executive coaching strong; manager coaching uneven.	Medium	Coach-the-coach program.	L&D
Communities	High	Communities of practice are active.	Low	Recognize community leaders.	Knowledge Office
Reflection	Low	After-action reviews are rare.	High	Standardize brief reflection sessions.	PMO
Knowledge Sharing	Moderate	Good within functions; weak across them.	High	Launch cross-functional forums.	Knowledge Office
Experimentation	Moderate	Pilots occur in innovation teams only.	Medium	Create experimentation fund.	Innovation
Trust	High	People ask for help freely.	Low	Maintain leader role modeling.	Exec Team
Psychological Safety	Moderate	Varies by team.	High	Facilitation training for managers.	HR
Curiosity	High	Questions encouraged in strategy meetings.	Low	Capture and share questions.	Leadership
Leadership Support	High	CEO champions capability.	Low	Cascade messaging.	Exec Team
Recognition	Low	Results rewarded more than learning.	High	Recognize capability builders.	HR
Time	Low	Little protected reflection time.	High	Reserve monthly reflection hour.	Business
Collaboration	Moderate	Cross-functional work is episodic.	Medium	Create recurring forums.	Operations

Catalyst Leverage Points

- Shared Language: Improves alignment across almost every other dimension.
- Reflection: Converts experience into capability and increases learning velocity.
- Measures: Shifts attention from learning activity to capability growth.

SECTION III

CREATE BETTER THINKING TOGETHER

Questions and conversations

Conversation Design Canvas™

Catalyst Questions™

Catalyst Questions™ Card Set

Catalyst Conversations™

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