Capability Design Canvas™ — Completed Example

Companion to Becoming a Catalyst | John Coné

The following example is illustrative, not a documented case.

A large organization asks Talent for a coaching program. Employees report that managers frequently solve problems for them. Talent convenes managers, employees, operations and HR to design a system that develops employee judgment, rather than beginning with a course.

A. Desired capability

Managers develop employees' judgment and ability to solve unfamiliar problems without unnecessary intervention.

B. Infrastructure

Shared language, practical conversation guides, approved AI support, appropriate employee information, peer connections and existing one-on-ones.

C. Experiences

Real-work coaching, observation with consent, peer consultation, stretch assignments, employee feedback, reflection and experimentation.

D. Conditions

Recognize development as part of work; provide time and permission, safe reflection and clear decision boundaries.

E. Interactions and orchestration

Tools support practice; leadership expectations encourage use; feedback improves tools. Talent, operational leaders, managers, employees, HR and technology share responsibility.

F. First experiment

Eight managers in two units for six weeks; test guides, two recurring real-work situations, leader support, peer exchanges and employee feedback. Preserve urgent decision and safety boundaries.

G. Continuous refinement

Managers share discoveries, revise guides, examine exceptions and gradually own peer exchanges. Track employee solutions, independence, operational performance, adaptation and knowledge movement.

These are proposed measures, not reported results. The experiment should also reveal when direct intervention is appropriate and whether the system can continue to improve without Talent organizing every exchange.

The guide remains provisional. Operational leaders review performance expectations, and managers take ownership of peer exchanges. Evidence includes employees proposing solutions, teams addressing unfamiliar problems independently, operational performance being maintained or improved, adaptations spreading, and improvement continuing without Talent.

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