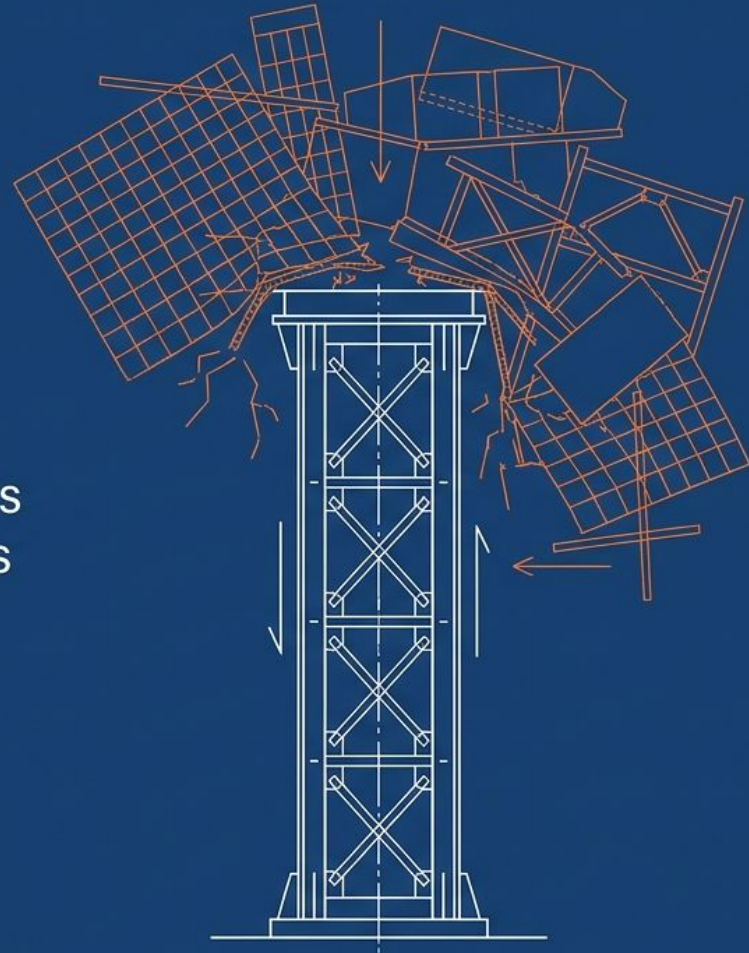


The Two-Job Job

The hidden physics of role sprawl, invisible workloads, and how leaders must redesign work before it breaks people.

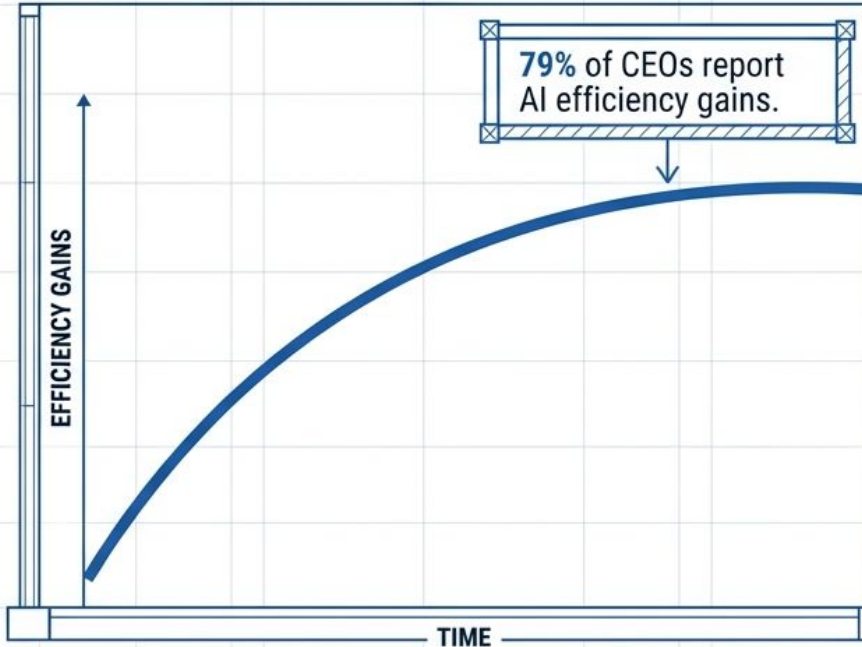
Based on the research of
Jonathan H. Westover, PhD.



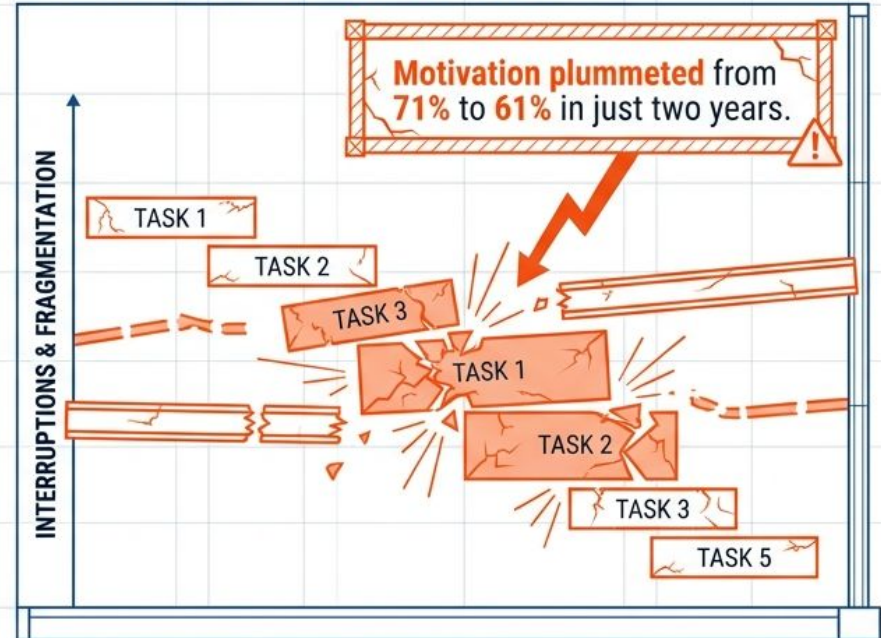
THE ILLUSION OF THE MODERN RESTRUCTURE

Organizations have spent years removing layers, holding headcount flat, and deploying generative AI. At the executive level, this looks like a leaner, highly efficient machine. On the ground, roles haven't become more efficient—they have simply fractured under the weight of unmanaged expectations.

THE VIEW FROM THE TOP



THE VIEW FROM THE FRONTLINE



The "Also" Epidemic

According to Korn Ferry's Workforce 2026 data of over 16,000 professionals, roles are no longer formally redesigned—they simply grow sideways.



61%

are carrying the responsibilities of more than one role.



62%

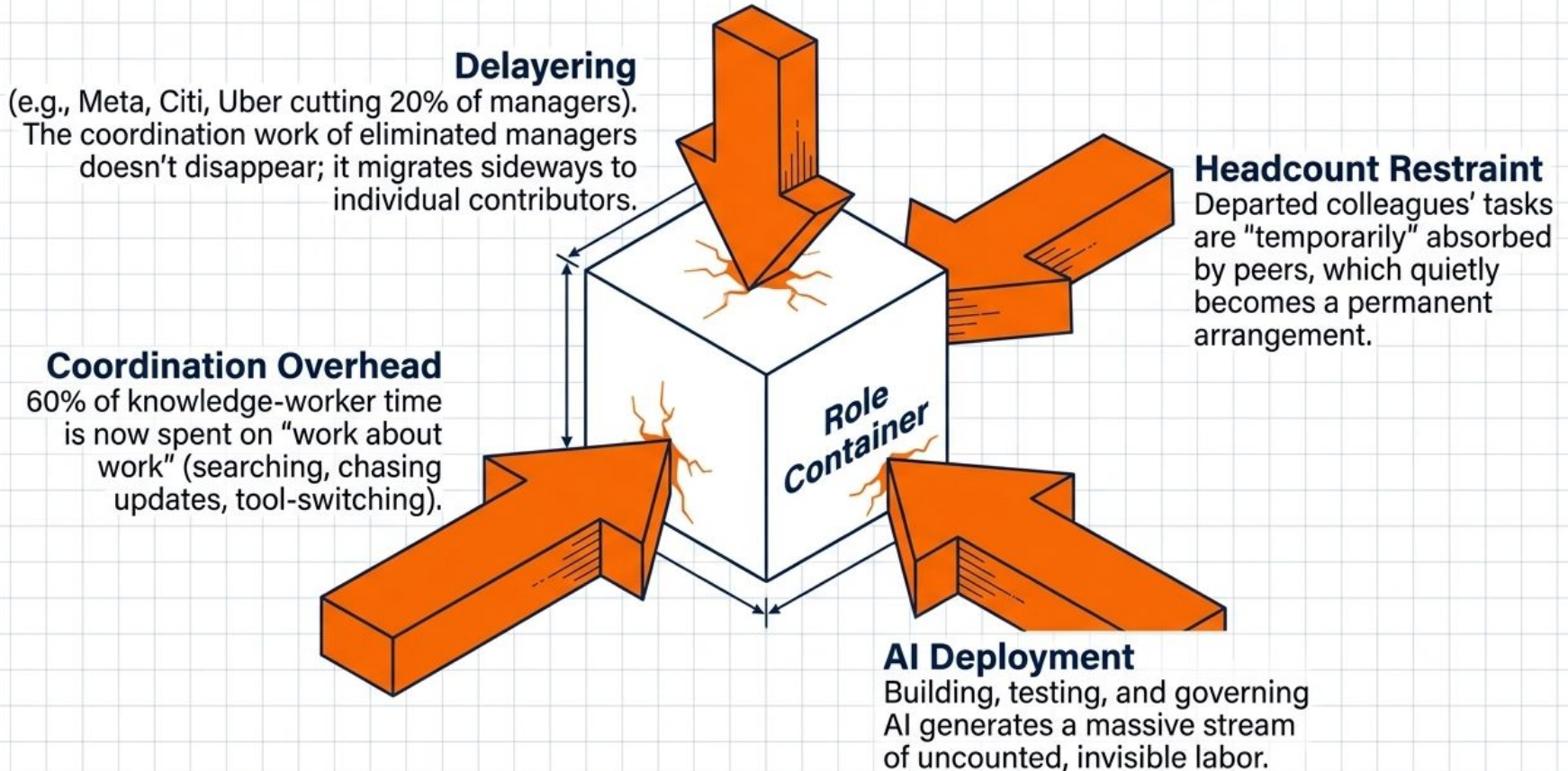
report significantly heavier workloads over the past two years.



45%

are too busy triaging daily demands to deliver meaningful, growth-driving results.

The Four Forces Squeezing the Modern Role



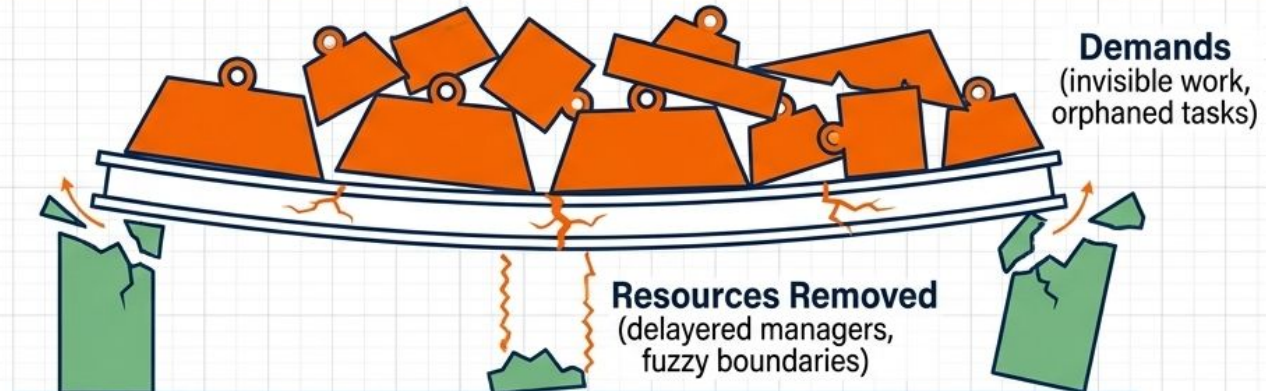
The Hidden Physics of Structural Failure

Role sprawl is a mechanical certainty. It steadily stacks demands (weights) while deliberately removing structural resources (support pillars). The inevitable result is a literal structural failure.

Role Enlargement / Promotion



Role Sprawl



The Activity-Productivity Gap

Overloaded roles generate costs that never appear on a spreadsheet.

High Activity & Hindrance Demands

Stressor Pathway

'Hindrance stressors' (ambiguity, red tape) crush motivation, unlike 'challenge stressors' which drive growth.

The Irony of Attrition

The most capable employees—those with the most market options—leave first, feeding the next round of toxic task redistribution to those who remain.

Time Famine

Urgent, highly visible interruptions crowd out the deep, future-proofing work required for innovation.

Valuable Output

Reframing the Burnout Problem

	The Old Way	The New Paradigm
The Diagnosis	Employees lack resilience to handle workplace stress.	The role demands mathematically exceed available human capacity.
The Solution	Wellness workshops and telling people to “ prioritize better. ”	Explicit, governed subtraction and capacity budgeting.
View of AI	An automatic, plug-and-play time-saver.	A structural capability requiring massive upfront build-time.

Telling people to prioritize treats the symptom while leaving the structural cause completely intact.

Decades of work design scholarship provide a practical, structural toolkit to diagnose and correct overloaded roles.



Fix 1: Subtract Before You Add

Every organizational addition has a sponsor; no one owns subtraction. Merging two jobs is an opportunity to strip out low-value elements of both.



Shopify's Calendar Purge

Eliminated 10,000 recurring calendar events, recovering over 76,500 hours of meetings.



Hawaii Pacific Health

Launched "Getting Rid of Stupid Stuff," finding a single mandatory click in EHRs that consumed 1,700 nursing hours per month, and immediately removing it.



Amazon

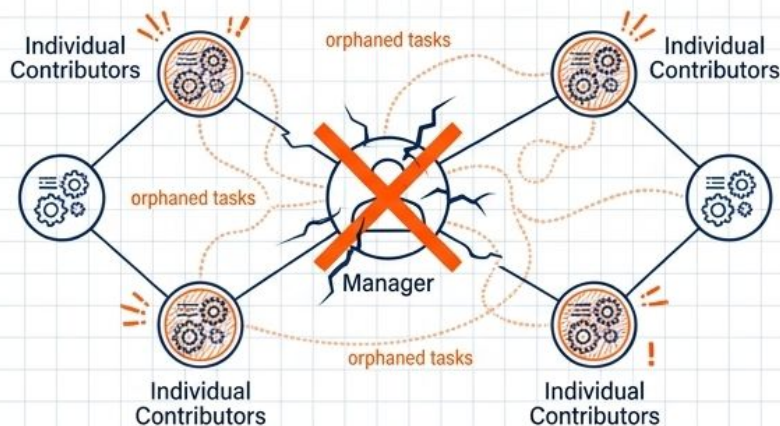
Installed a dedicated bureaucracy-reporting mailbox to catch useless processes during a major delayering push.



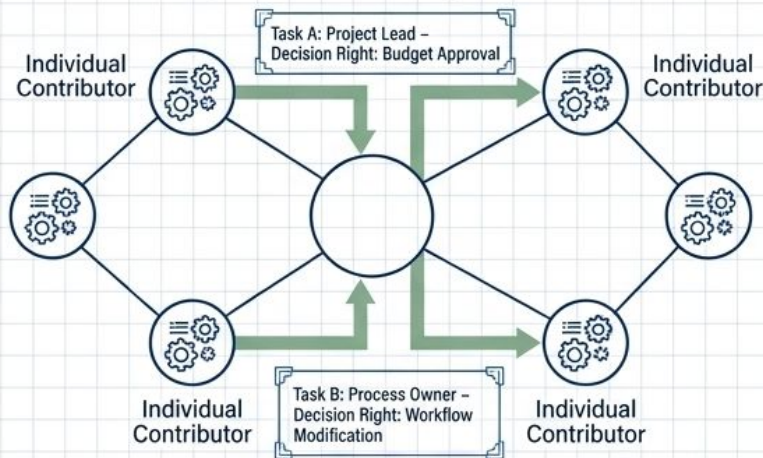
Fix 2: Re-Charter Roles After Restructuring

Restructuring announcements dictate what is removed, but rarely define what remains. Orphaned tasks drift toward the most conscientious employees.

Unmanaged Drift



Explicit Reassignment



Techniques

Conduct orphaned-task audits, map decision rights explicitly, and set interim-to-permanent review deadlines.

Proof Point

Bayer's Dynamic Shared Ownership removed 5,500 jobs, replacing implicit management with explicitly chartered, self-allocating teams operating on 90-day cycles.

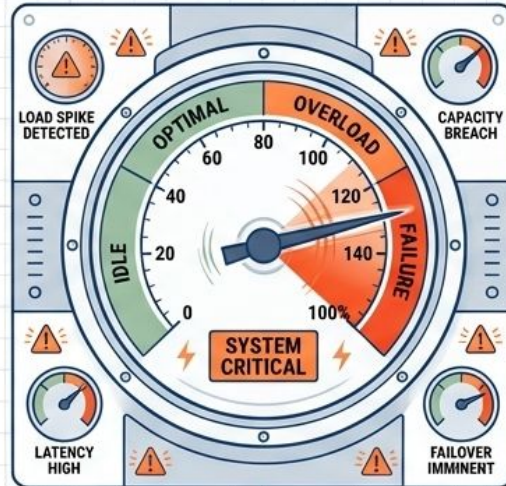
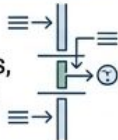
Fix 3: Govern Workload as a Capacity Budget

Treat human capacity exactly how you treat financial capital: as a strictly **finite, governed resource**.

TIME/FOCUS BALANCE	DEBIT (LOAD)	CREDIT (FOCUS)	AVAILABLE CAPACITY
Meeting: Sync	-1.0h		2.0h
Meeting: Status Update	-0.5h		+1.5h
Focus Time: Deep Work	-0.0h	+2.0h	+2.0h
Focus Time: Project Planning	-1.5h	+1.5h	+1.5h
			3.0h
			+1.5h
			+9.0h
BALANCE	-1.0h		-40,000 ⚠

Techniques

Work-in-progress (WIP) limits, explicit trade-off rules (if X is added, Y must stop).



The Telemetry Warning

Microsoft data reveals the average employee is interrupted every 2 minutes, receiving 153 Teams messages daily, driving a 16% year-over-year increase in meetings after 8 p.m.



Proof Point

Dropbox implemented protected, 4-hour core collaboration windows, forcing asynchronous work as the default to protect structural capacity.



Fix 4: Make Hidden Work Visible (The AI Paradox)

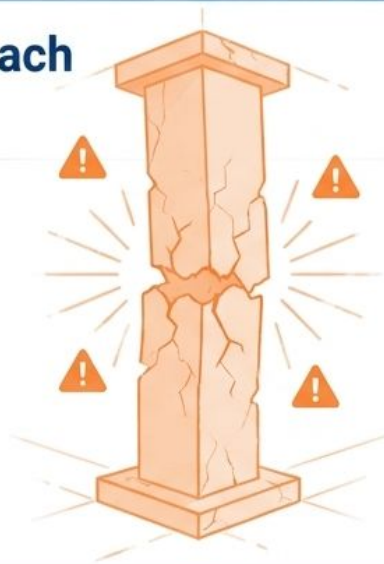
Unrecognized work flows to the helpful, widening equity gaps. Generative AI is the newest, heaviest form of hidden work.

Case Study Comparison Matrix

The Law Firm Approach (Failure)

Treated AI as an informal "extra" task on top of billable hours.

Result: 80% of experts dropped out; only 3 tools built.



The Medical Center Approach (Success)

Built AI experimentation explicitly into formal job responsibilities and promotion reviews.

Result: 141 functional tools built.



Takeaway: True AI efficiency requires explicit structural build-time mapped into the role architecture.

Fix 5: Resource Managers & Enable Job Crafting

The Manager Reality

Managers are not overhead; they are **capacity-allocating resources**.

55% of remaining managers are exhausted, and 39% of workers report feeling directionless without them.

As spans widen, administrative load must be explicitly reduced.



Structured Job Crafting

Give employees the **latitude—and explicit leadership permission—to drop permission—to drop low-value hindrances.**

Do not force them to individually “craft” their way out of a broken, overloaded system alone.

The Continuous Redesign Engine

Fixing the present isn't enough. Preventing future sprawl requires embedding three permanent structural capabilities:

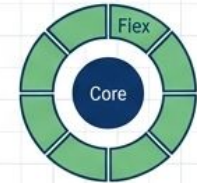
Workload Governance

Treating capacity impact statements (time required for new initiatives) with the exact same rigor as financial budget proposals.



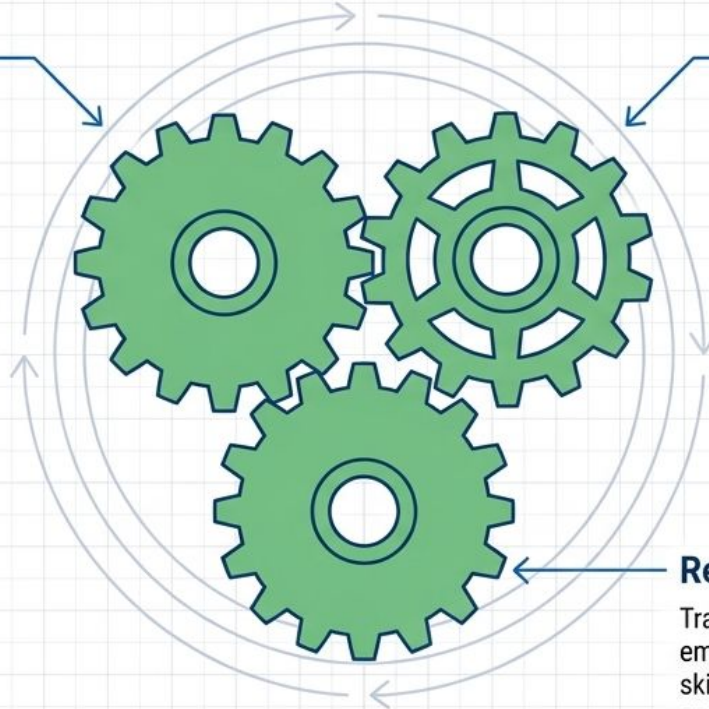
Flexible Role Architecture

Designing roles with a locked "core identity" surrounded by formally managed, explicitly tracked "flex-responsibilities."



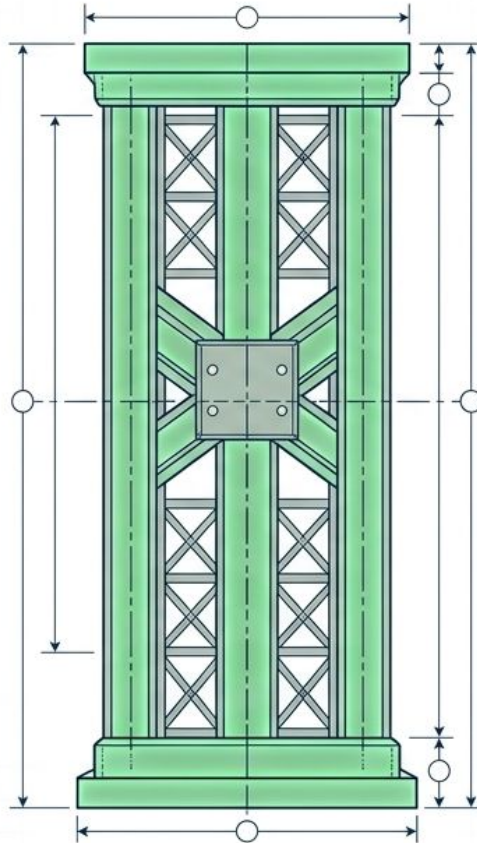
Redesign Capability

Training both leaders and employees in the literal, everyday skill of continuous work redesign and boundary negotiation.



The Final Architecture

The two-job job is not an accident of time management; it is a mathematically predictable product of cutting capacity without cutting work.



The choice is not between efficiency and wellbeing. It is between designing work on purpose, and letting it design itself.