



Connected
Commons



Leadership

How Successful Leaders Manage Collaborative Overload



Reducing Collaborative Overload



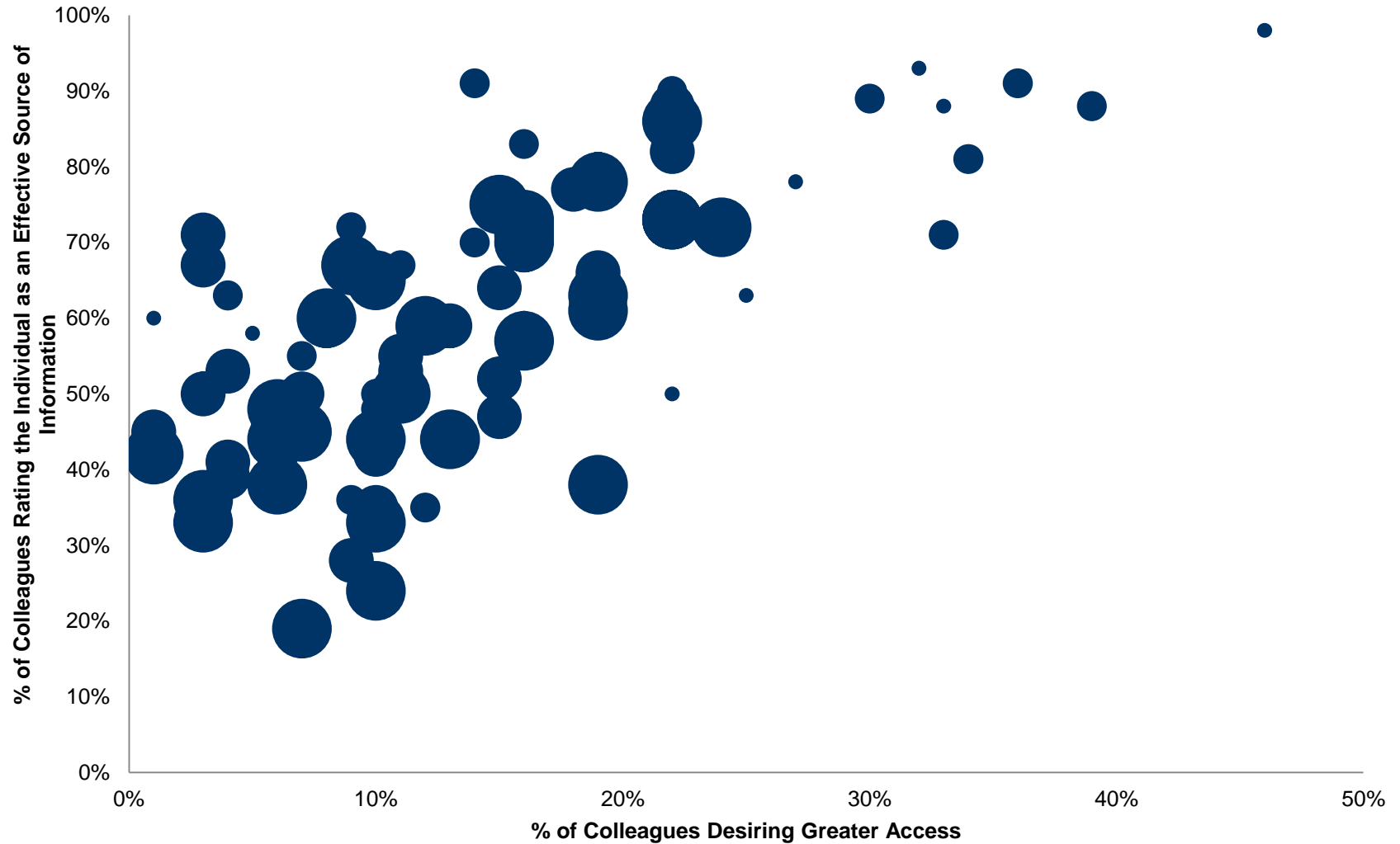
80-95% of leaders time spent on email, phone calls or in meetings (virtual and face to face).



50% increase in diversity and volume of collaborative demands over past 8 years due to globalization, matrix structures and technology.

What role is focused on this increase in consumption of a valuable resource (i.e., your and your colleagues' time)?

Decreasing Relational Load Is Important For BOTH Performance and Well-Being At Work



Significant Collaborative Drains In Your Work



Reflect on common examples of collaborative drains. Which is most impactful at your organization? What could you do about it?

- Ineffective email or collaborative technology use.
- Excessive number of meetings/poor meeting management.
- Matrix-based design/lack of role clarity.
- Overly relational context/unwillingness to make decision.
- Excessive decision-making or process-oriented interactions.
- Fear of making mistake or upsetting others.
- Knee jerk reaction to include everyone.

Collaborative Overload On Line Assessment

Network Assessments



Collaborative Overload On Line Assessment

Network Assessments

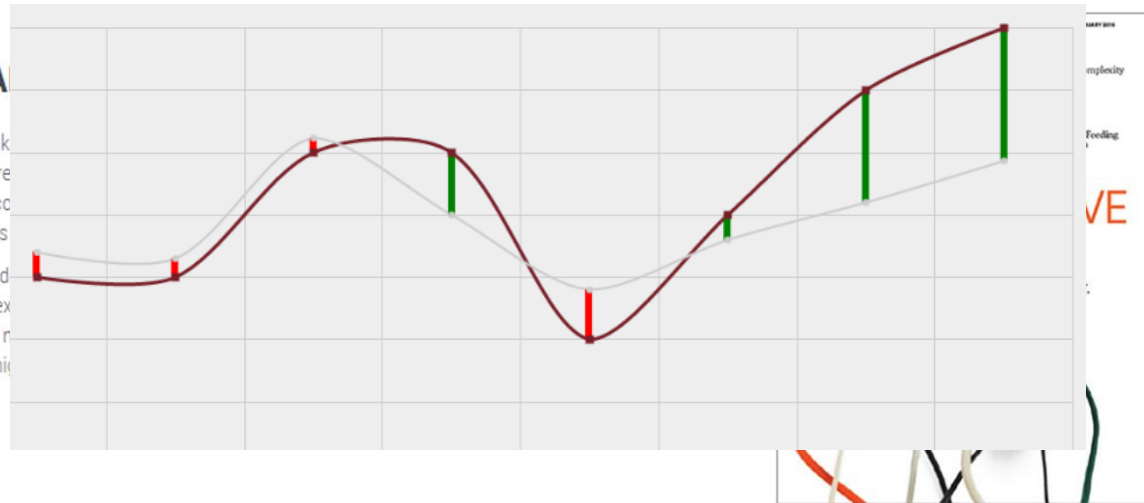
EXPLORE YOUR RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

GREETINGS

UNDERSTA

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Actions To Re-Claim 18-24% of Your Time



Impose Structure

- Orient to North Star Objectives
- Adapt Role & Interdependencies



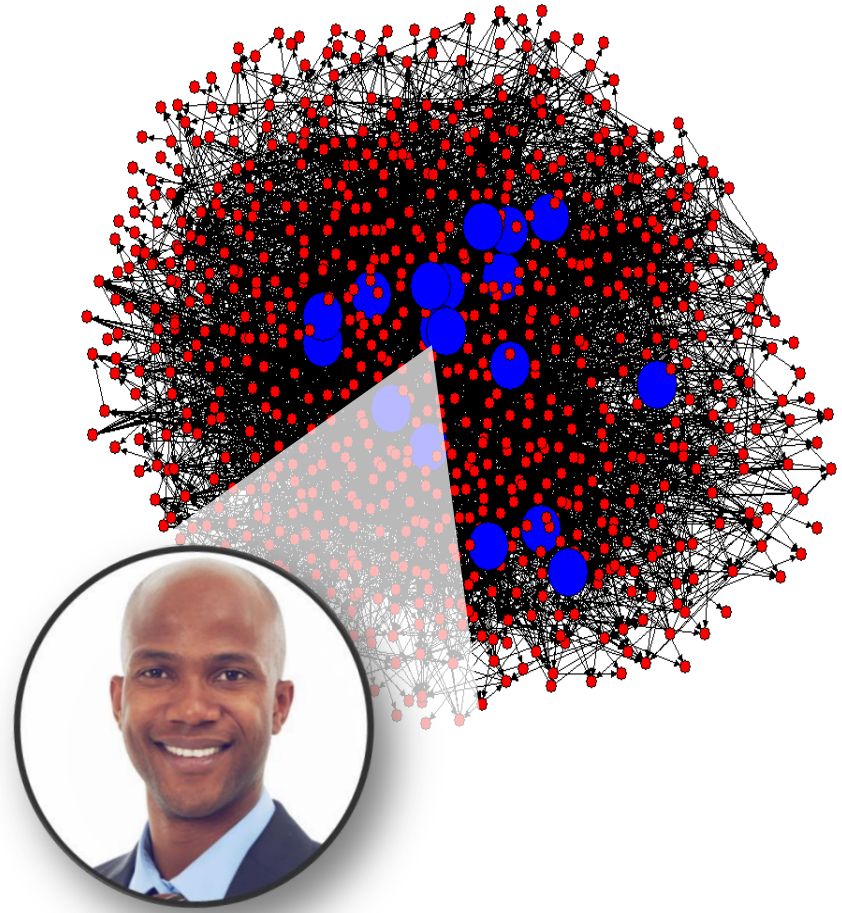
Reducing Collaborative Overload



shaping your role to affect volume of demands

Scott reshaped his **role**:

- adjusted **decision** thresholds
- extracted from **routine interactions**
- Designated a number of people as “go to” people on **information requests**



Reducing Collaborative Overload

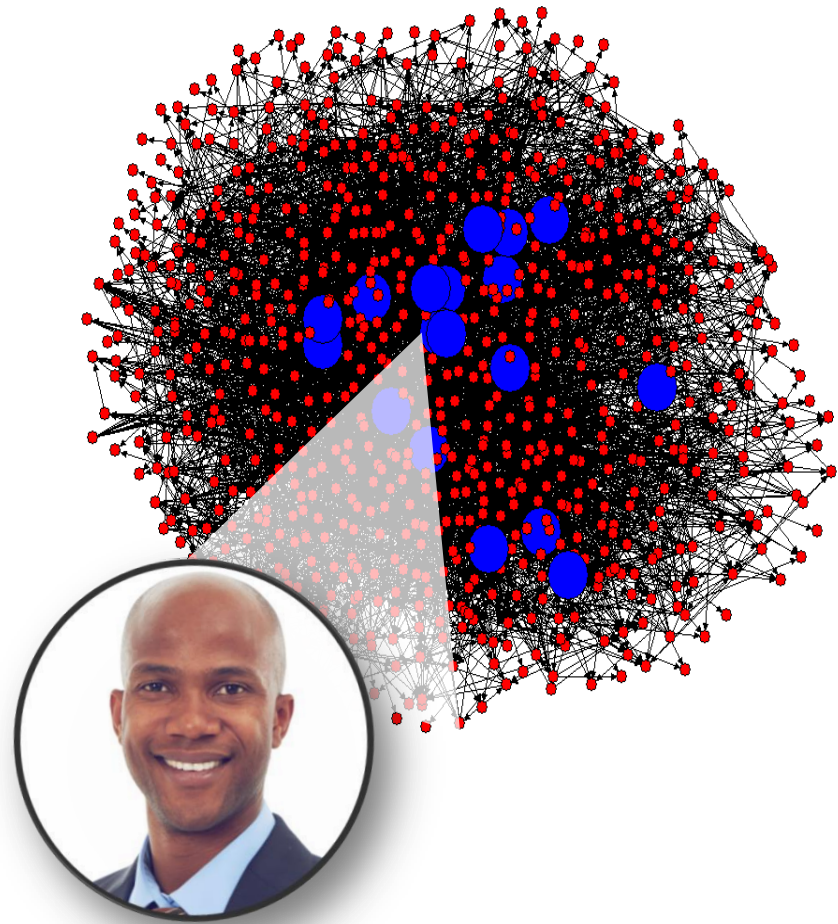


behavior change

to affect volume of demands

Scott adjust his **behavior**:

- **ask more** (answer less)
- more selective **which problems he helped solve**
- more cautious in **improving others' plans**
- Blogging to **communicate** certain ideas **more consistently**



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Challenge Beliefs

- Assess Identity & Reputation Influences
- Manage Anxiety & Need For Control



The Enemy Is Pervasive

Demanding clients, overwhelmed bosses, unresponsive colleagues, meeting overload, time-zones, email, etc.



But The Enemy Is Also Familiar



Without exception people beyond the individual contributor level in our research had an epiphany moment – often brought on by crisis -- for how they were causing problems.

Two Paths To Collaborative Overload

Function of volume, diversity, complexity and affect of collaborative demands



The Surge



Surges Occur When

1. Promoted – 1st level, Mgr of Mgr and Senior Exec.
2. We are compelled (e.g., Boss or Crisis)
3. We are seduced (e.g., Excitement, Friend)
4. We are scared (e.g., of label, FOMO)

The Slow Burn



Slow Burn Occurs When

1. We derive satisfaction from accomplishment
2. We let system chart our path and network
3. We see choices (if at all) as binary
4. We are scared to let go or be wrong

Beliefs and Values That Drive Overload

What do you see in your leaders? You?



Create value by outcome (smartest in room) rather than process (can solve problem)

Fear of losing control – or a belief that you are the only one that can do it well or that it would take too long to teach others.



Excessive desire to help creates the person as the path of least resistance for all needs and requests.

Derive too great a sense of identity or power from being “in the know” or create too great a reliance in expertise domains good for yesterday.

Fear of being labeled a poor performer of colleague. Binary view of the word “No.”

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Alter Behaviors

- Ensure Channel Efficiency
- Create Efficient Interaction Norms

Actions To Re-Claim 18-24% of Your Time



Adjusting medium/channel use and promoting efficient network norms to decrease collaborative overload

Ensure Channel Efficiency

- ☐ My meetings are focused on desired outcomes, include only those who need to be involved and are efficient in structure and process.
- ☐ I write streamlined emails and encourage efficient norms of email use.
- ☐ I use Instant Messaging (IM) to increase efficiency of established relationships.
- ☐ I support virtual collaborations with rich mediums (e.g., video and audio) and collaborative tools that enable colleagues to work on a single work product.

Create Efficient Interaction Norms

- ☐ I draw people to collaborative work by giving status, envisioning joint success, diffusing ownership and generating a sense of purpose/energy around an outcome.
- ☐ I adapt my behavior and teach others how to consume my time rather than let inefficient norms develop and persist.
- ☐ I allocate appropriate time for collaborative tasks rather than assume an hour or half an hour is always needed.
- ☐ I develop trust so that people do not feel an excessive need to seek input or approvals.

Reducing Collaborative Overload



The collaborative intensity of work has exploded and is a reality that is here to stay.

There is no “silver bullet” solution.

Rather proactively shaping role, narrative and behaviors typically gains 18-24% of collaborative time.

Playing defense sucks. You are always reactive and living in fear. The only way to get out of it is to get clarity on who you are and what you want to do and start forging a path and network that enables you to get there.

Senior Executive – Global Insurance Company