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Capacity or Aim?

Most organisations are running at half their capacity and calling it full. Not because people aren't working hard — but because "hard" and "productive" stopped meaning the same thing a long time ago.

The uncomfortable data is everywhere. Benchmarks across thousands of industrial assets put typical utilisation near half of what the equipment could deliver. Deloitte finds people spend more than 40% of their day on work that creates no value — and that they gravitate to whatever is most visible, whether or not it is a priority. **We are not short of effort. We are short of aim**.

I once worked with a maintenance team that wanted to hit its plan more reliably. We decided not to ask "did we follow the plan?" and started asking "**was the plan built around what this crew can actually do?**" The information to answer that already existed, kept by another team for another purpose entirely. Nobody had thought to bring the two together. Once we did, the same people, on the same days, delivered markedly more. **Nothing was added. The aim was corrected.**

That's where leadership has to focus on two things at once. Remain strategic — but care about the detail, because the opportunities that move the needle don't always announce themselves at the top. They sit one layer down, **in a number that isn't challenged, in a team that never gets asked, in capacity already bought and paid for and pointed at the wrong work**.

And seeing it isn't enough. The strategic act is to **stretch the right target**, so the organisation is pulled toward what you've seen. A comfortable target buys compliance. A well-set stretch target draws out invention — people find capacity you didn't know was there, because you finally asked them to.

Not working harder. The building is already tired. **Working from a clearer view of what's real, with the nerve to aim higher.**

More often than we think, the capacity is already there. What's missing is the aim — and aim is a leadership decision, made at the top and felt all the way down.