

Improving the Productivity of Engineers and Scientists

ABSTRACT

This session is based on the groundbreaking research of Dr. Robert E. Kelley, Carnegie Mellon University professor and author of the best-seller **“HOW TO BE A STAR AT WORK: Nine Breakthrough Strategies You Need to Succeed.”**

Over a seven-year period, Dr. Kelley and his colleagues led nearly 1,000 **knowledge workers** at AT&T’s Bell Labs through a unique development process—with outstanding results. Program participants noted such dramatic improvements in their personal productivity that the program was featured in a Harvard Business Review article, “How Bell Labs Creates Star Performers.” The research story has also been reported in IEEE’s *Spectrum*, and *Fast Company*.

The objectives of the session are to:

1. Understand that productivity improvement skills and strategies can be learned and are not innate.
2. Understand how engineers and scientists define and measure their productivity.
3. Hear examples and gain insights into how star-performing engineers and scientists execute the nine star-performer work strategies that impact their productivity.
4. Offer ideas, strategies and suggestions –based on real-life examples gathered during 10 years of consulting engagements-- on how to improve personal productivity.

SESSION DESIGN

We use a combination of short lectures, large group facilitation with thought-provoking questions, small group discussions, and various application activities to achieve the objectives. The sessions are highly engaging, supplemented with appropriate audio-visuals, and are facilitated by the best consultants in the business.

Examples of Activities/Discussions

- A. *Facilitator leads a debate about what predictors of productivity and value contribution.*
- B. *Participants read a case study and discuss whether the engineer in the case added significant value to the organization through her actions, or whether her actions simply constituted ‘doing her job.’*
- C. *Participants rate their self-management systems against the self-management systems of star performers and identify practical improvement tips.*
- D. *Participants pair up with someone they don’t know, compare specific aspects of their work styles, and consider how work style differences can significantly impact their personal productivity.*

Participants will leave the session with several practical, concrete ideas on how to improve their productivity.

SESSION LENGTH/TARGET AUDIENCE

The session can be delivered effectively to meet the above objectives in a 3-hour format.

Technical contributors, their managers, and human resources staff who support technical staff would all benefit from the presentation.