Productivity in practice

Ten productivity-boosting examples in the public sector

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Why productivity matters

In times of rising economic and societal challenges, the public sector plays a pivotal role in protecting the wellbeing of citizens, providing a path to economic recovery, and stimulating sustained growth and improvement in living standards. To successfully perform this role, the public sector must maximise productivity.

Yet, productivity in the public sector only increased by an average of 0.7% per year from 2010 to 2019, and we still have a limited understanding of how to improve it beyond attempting to do more with less.

We must find practical ways to improve this picture; not only to create higher quality services for citizens and boost the economy (the public sector accounts for around 20% of UK GDP), but also to enhance employee engagement and motivate people to embrace change.

To address the productivity challenge, we partnered with The Productivity Institute to find practical ways for public sector organisations to accelerate productivity and create a pathway to improve efficiency, opportunities and outcomes for all.

We found that to make productivity practical, it's essential for organisations to map out their service delivery chain in real-time, from budgets to inputs, outputs and outcomes. In parallel, they also need to create a robust strategy using the three key drivers of public sector productivity:

01
Adaptive business design

02
Innovation and digital transformation

03
An agile workforce

You can download our full report, Making Public Sector Productivity Practical, at www.content.capita.com/Productivity-and-public-services/criticaleye

Analysing the key drivers of productivity

Here, we look at the three key drivers of productivity and show how organisations, in a broad range of industries, from healthcare and defence to education and government, are transforming their approach to productivity.

> **Government expenditure accounts for about 40% of GDP and during the pandemic, in 2020, it was close to 50% of total spending. Therefore, increased productivity in the public sector can also help to relieve pressure on the government's fiscal situation.**

PRODUCTIVITY DRIVER:

Adaptive business design

Organisational design is at the core of any high productivity organisation. However, the 'business' of providing public services is affected by volatility and change from external and internal sources.

External forces come from regulatory or legislative change, and global issues such as the war in Ukraine and cost of living crisis. Internal forces relate to shortages of staff or lack of skills, technology opportunities, or budgetary changes.

By improving flexibility, public sector organisations can respond to change more effectively. This requires finding a better balance between hard budget constraints and spending flexibility, and between scaling up the delivery of public services while also tailoring to specific customer segments. Organisations must also be willing to adapt their processes to optimise the delivery of services.

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Enabling mass testing to protect public health

In October 2020, the UK was on the verge of entering a second national lockdown. The Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) Test and Trace programme had a critical role in monitoring and suppressing the virus. The asymptomatic testing sites division was looking at how a new flexible workforce could harness new lateral flow testing devices (LFDs) and help to proactively diagnose and protect the public during this critical time.

The DHSC needed to quickly and safely train individuals to support mass testing in organisations such as schools, care homes, local authorities and the private sector through a new digital solution. This new way of working needed a learning platform that could be safely rolled out to accelerate training for thousands of individuals.

We worked alongside the DHSC and Crown Commercial Services (CCS) to design a solution that utilised self-service content. The solution could be scaled up quickly by involving military and civilian users and did not require the involvement of clinical trainers who had already been redeployed back into the NHS.

In just eight days, a pilot platform with video content was rolled out. This upskilled 2,000 initial military and civilian users on how to process lateral flow tests. The pilot expanded to training over half a million people across the UK, supporting the DHSC to meet a long series of rapid yet critical deadlines and help government to maintain vital services during the pandemic.

You can read more about the successful programme at www.capita.com/our-work/helping-roll-out-mass-covid-19-testing-through-expert-clinical-training

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PRODUCTIVITY IN PRACTICE

Creating an adaptive business design to deliver social change

In 2011, automatic enrolment transformed workplace pensions. The Pensions Regulator utilised an adaptive workforce and a multi-channel customer contact centre to educate businesses throughout the UK. As a result, 22.9 million people now save into a workplace pension.

The introduction of automatic enrolment constituted a major social change programme. The Pensions Regulator needed to ensure that employers of all sizes, and with varying levels of pensions expertise, were kept informed to meet the pension reform goal. We helped to operate a multi-channel customer contact centre and employed 150 staff across two sites to communicate directly with every employer in the UK.

The flexible workforce operations could be scaled up or down according to peaks and troughs of activity, always ensuring that users could access help and advice when they needed it. In 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic began, more than 50% of customer support staff were unable to work, either due to self-isolation, caring for vulnerable dependents or the inability to travel to work. With flexibility built into the workforce design, the teams were able to transition to remote working within 48 hours with minimal service disruption.

At the end of the 10-year contract we exited the programme, seamlessly transferring all services as planned with no negative impacts on service performance.

To read more visit
www.capita.com/our-work/helping-people-save-retirement-more-financially-secure-society
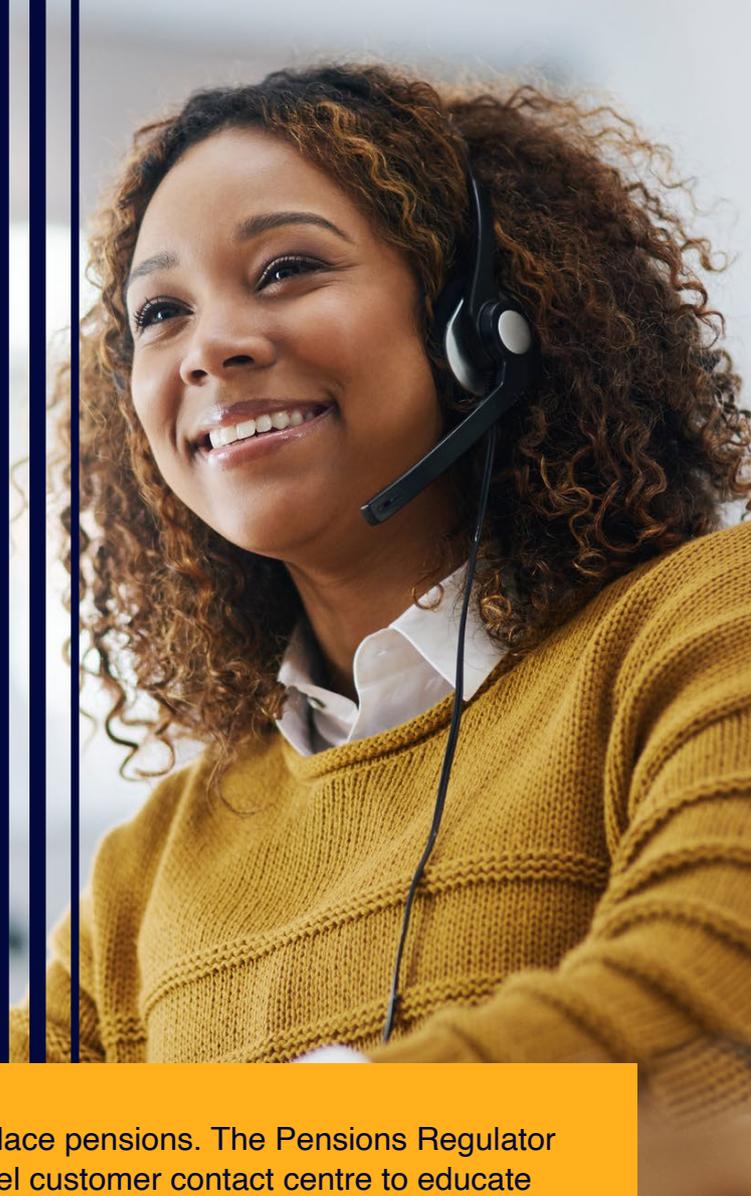
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PRODUCTIVITY IN PRACTICE

Deploying 'super teams' to build technology solutions

WithYouWithMe (WYWM) is a social impact company, founded by ex-military professionals, who use the military's method of testing and training to build high performing individuals and teams.

A 'super team' is made up of senior Capita managers, and a team of trained WYWM developers and technologists who enable the delivery of large, complex projects to defence and government. Strategically, the teams focus on capturing long-term opportunities, developing sustainable technology solutions and delivering them through our ready-made workforce.

Our super teams allow Capita to drive and direct WYWM's new talent by embedding a senior person with the skills and experience to identify opportunities, map effective roadmaps and deliver sustainable solutions. Additionally, where a project requires a strategic level of planning and oversight, WYWM can deploy a principal advisor.

Once the solution is built, it is either handed over to the organisation, along with appropriate training, or the team of technologists can be absorbed into the organisation as permanent staff.

By taking an adaptive business approach that capitalises on the skills and experience of each partner, we can super-charge our support to public sector organisations and enable them to deliver more.

To find out more email
oliver.walter@capita.com

Innovation and digital transformation

Digital transformation is critical in driving continuous innovation in public sector organisations by utilising technology to simplify, streamline and enhance the delivery of products and services.

It can also support and raise productivity at the backend of the service delivery chain through shared service centres and digital platforms. This can help to free up and reallocate scarce human capital to focus on frontline services.

Leveraging new technologies and, importantly, the data they generate, can connect organisations, physical assets, processes and people. Data can also inform decision-making as big data analytics and AI techniques make it possible to filter relevant knowledge from massive databases and to share insights more widely.

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PRODUCTIVITY IN PRACTICE

Transforming data to inform Police Scotland's decision-making

Police Scotland transformed their use of data, by bringing together over 40 different data sources from eight legacy regional forces into one integrated system. This is now helping to drive faster and better decision-making.

To protect vulnerable people and help to reduce crime, police forces must be able to access information quickly. Police Scotland faced the challenge of their data being spread across eight legacy systems, slowing down their effectiveness and productivity. We helped the force to break the problem down and focus on one legacy system first to prove that a flexible and achievable migration strategy would work.

By utilising advanced Extract, Transform and Load methods alongside the skills and experience of our policing experts, we helped the force to seamlessly migrate their data. Police Scotland are no longer bound by the limitations of their old systems and can easily access and use their operational and organisational data to make connections that inform their decisions. This is more efficient, effective and productive.

It has also saved Police Scotland money by enabling them to decommission expensive legacy applications and ensure they comply with data retention governance. The legacy data migration began in 2021, region by region, and will successfully complete in early 2023.

To find out more about how we are supporting police forces and the judiciary to improve productivity through technology, visit www.capita.com/services/services-police-forces-and-judiciary

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**PRODUCTIVITY
IN PRACTICE**

Accelerating complex financial compensation claims with AI

The Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) provides crucial protection to customers of failed financial services firms. In order to process high volumes of complex claims quickly and efficiently, the FSCS requested us to help design a digital solution.

When a large investment fund collapsed, FSCS needed to process huge numbers of claims and get decisions to customers as quickly as possible. This involved listening to and analysing more than 700,000 voice messages.

To reduce the need for manual intervention and ensure customer teams could focus on supporting claimants, we built a custom speech-to-text solution that used Microsoft's Azure Speech Services alongside our own tools.

The solution used key words and phrases that were identified by FSCS and transcribed the call recording quickly and accurately. The transcriptions were then saved into an easy-to-use, searchable and referenceable database. FSCS used the solution to unlock the insights within the voice messages to support decision-making on individual claims.

By using natural language processing, our solution compressed the human process from eight months to three weeks, providing a significantly more accurate AI model than anything existing in the financial services sector. It has transformed the experience of claims handlers, FSCS and their customers

We've since expanded and developed a next-generation platform called Accelerate which can process large volumes of unstructured information from any source or format. Accelerate transforms the process of claims handling when high volumes of documents are involved, significantly speeding up transaction times and customer service response times, while also reducing the cost of processing claims.

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Reimagining learning to increase speed to competency

Gas Safe Register is the official list of businesses and gas engineers who are qualified to work legally on gas appliances. It uses AI-powered adaptive learning to accelerate the time to assess and qualify its engineers.

Prior to the covid-19 pandemic, engineers had to attend in person events to complete low risk inspections and assessments to prove competency. Approximately 9,000 in person inspections were conducted annually which carried significant costs in both venue hire and resources to manage events.

Working with one of our partners, Obrizum, we helped reimagine an online integrated learning experience. The solution enabled more engineers to learn via a virtual classroom for a fraction of the face-to-face costs. Through Obrizum's innovative AI learning platform we were able to adapt the questions and learning techniques to better understand the confidence and underpinning knowledge of each engineer.

The solution improved the understanding of the engineer's risk profile and the follow-up actions required to address these. In addition, it provided engineers with the flexibility to complete the learning and assessment at a place that suited them with minimal travel time. Transforming how Gas Safe Register engineers are assessed and qualified has seen operational cost savings. It has also improved productivity by helping engineers to reach competency in their learning and assessment two and half times faster than the previous in-person events.

✉ **To find out more about adaptive learning please email** oliver.walter@capita.com

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Improving patient care by transforming procurement

Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) have implemented a new procurement service that has saved them millions of pounds and helped their staff to be more effective.

More than two million people in London and Hertfordshire depend on CLCH to help them access healthcare in their homes and at local clinics, so they can avoid unnecessary or lengthy stays in hospital. With limited procurement resources, the Trust had a difficult time managing its budget and spending effectively to help local people.

In 2017, CLCH embarked on a project to create a procurement function to support their core value of providing quality care to patients in the community. Our experts conducted a procurement maturity review using our spend analytics tools. We identified more than £25m of potential savings that could be delivered over the next five years. We also recommended a series of improvements and created a transformation roadmap, tailored to CLCH's specific needs, to address their challenges and create a best-in-class procurement function.

CLCH requested us to implement the transformation strategy and over the following eight-months we delivered a programme that enhanced strategy, policy, governance, contract management, business intelligence, training and service quality.

The procurement service has had a positive impact on productivity by ensuring frontline medical staff have access to the medical supplies they need more efficiently. The management team also have greater visibility of contracts and types of spend, and they can now track costs at a granular level, and the procurement function's performance, through a balanced scorecard of metrics.

The programme has also had a significant financial impact. More than £20m of the targeted £25m in contract life savings has been delivered to date, equating to a reduction of more than £1.9m in recurring costs per year.

PRODUCTIVITY DRIVER:

An agile workforce

All technological or organisational transformations require a reset of skills and competencies of the workforce. Yet, developing a workforce with the technical skills to leverage the latest digital technologies, along with the softer skills required to improve customer experience, can be challenging.

An agile workforce is one that gets work done with maximum flexibility and minimum constraints by using the full potential of full-time, part-time and contingent workers who are constantly engaged with the organisation. An increase in managerial quality can significantly improve public sector productivity, which makes the skills and competencies of managers another important component.

Agility also tends to generate greater employee satisfaction and higher morale, which can lead to greater productivity. To achieve this, the creation of an agile workforce should be preceded by strong consultative processes and ownership of new working arrangements by those most involved in the delivery.

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PRODUCTIVITY IN PRACTICE

Leveraging talent to close the digital skills gap

WithYouWithMe (WYWM) helped the Royal Lancers, the British Army's leading reconnaissance Regiment, to undertake an innovative technology capability building programme that could serve as a blueprint for how the entire British Army addresses its digital skills gap.

In June 2022, 259 Royal Lancers participated in a ground-breaking skills mapping and digital training programme with WYWM. The programme was designed to help unit level commanders leverage the digital talent within the force and identify soldiers with natural abilities to excel in key digital roles such as cyber, software engineering and data analytics.

The goal was to use innovative psychometric testing to identify individuals who had the aptitude to thrive in technology roles and also to identify leadership potential across the force.

The skills mapping showed that **99 of the individuals** were more than a **60% match to data analytics. 71 people** were more than a **60% match** to low code application development, and **90 people** were more than a **60% match** to generic software development.

Completing this exercise has enabled the Royal Lancers to understand more about the potential of their teams and help prepare them for the future of work.

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PRODUCTIVITY IN PRACTICE

Transforming civilian aviation firefighter training

With the Capita-owned Fire Service College (FSC) already globally renowned as a leading training provider for fire and rescue services, we have helped to apply these high standards to civilian aviation firefighter training.

London Oxford Airport's (LOA) expansion to a category six airport coincided with the expiration of its civilian firefighters' training contract. To support the airport's upgrade, they needed a fresh training programme with new learning methods. Drawing on its wealth of training experience, the Fire Service College (FSC) developed a bespoke blended training programme, utilising e-learning and practical methods that satisfied the airport's practical and regulatory needs.

Airport rescue and firefighting services respond to a diverse range of incidents and encounter different types of risks, and although the risk from a major incident is low, realistic operational training is critical to prepare staff to respond and ultimately save lives.

The new blended training programme ensures firefighters complete two practical training days each year to keep up-to-date on their training and comply with any new aviation industry legislation. They also undergo regular training and evaluation by the FSC assessors via an e-learning platform which can be accessed from the workplace, home, or on a mobile device.

The FSC has now expanded its offering to include an Aviation Firefighter Initial Course. This programme is transformational in its approach and closes the gap between training and reality. Its inaugural course started in November 2022 at Heathrow. FSC will train Heathrow's newest recruits to National Occupational and Civil Aviation Standards and provide a basis of excellence as they begin their firefighting career.

The combination of online and practical training is helping to ensure teams are well equipped and ready to respond, while reducing the time needed away from their day-to-day duties.

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PRODUCTIVITY IN PRACTICE

Driving digital intelligence and evidence in policing

The Policing Vision 2025 and the 'Real lives, real crime' report both identified the effect that digital crime is having on policing. They recommended that officers and staff needed better awareness of how to investigate and gather digital evidence. To help, the College of Policing tasked us with developing an innovative training programme.

A key challenge was how to develop a programme that would train both new and serving officers, police staff and volunteers, including an estimated 20,000 new police officers over the next three years. Although, the roles of the learner and their involvement in digital evidence would differ, the overall experience needed to be immersive and engaging.

We worked collaboratively to design and deliver a gamified experience that included 11 episodes with an overarching narrative. The course follows the events from the beginning of an incident to show how to identify sources of digital evidence and respond to digital opportunities.

It includes topics such as digital scene management, online fraud, missing persons, and victim support, and

provides access to further resources at point of need – enabling participants to take control of their learning. Prior to its launch, an initial trailer animation was released to encourage police forces to sign up, and the feedback from a cohort of new recruits has been overwhelmingly positive:

100% would recommend to a colleague.

99% said their confidence had increased.

97% found it a useful way to learn.

This innovative approach helped to highlight the importance of digital evidence and enabled more effective investigations. The method also boosted productivity by reducing training time and allowing participants to apply their learning to their role.

Putting productivity into practice

If the previous examples have motivated and inspired you to look at productivity within your own organisations, there are three practical actions you can take to give you a better picture of where your challenges are, so you can make better progress:

Identify and solve constraints

Measure and manage performance

Collaborate and communicate

01
Focus on the greatest bottleneck in the flow of resources from inputs to outputs to outcomes.

02
Improve measurement to help you evaluate processes and allocate resources. This requires data strategies at an organisational level and investment in data analysts, software tools and cloud-based technologies.

03
Collaborate externally to obtain new resources and communicate your productivity measures and performance internally to drive change.

☑ Take the first step to improved productivity

Start by mapping out your organisation's service delivery chain on a real-time basis, then look in more detail at your organisational design and what you need to do to build an adaptive organisation with a culture of continuous innovation. By creating a more agile workforce you will have the flexibility to better identify and resolve the issues that are holding you back with new smarter, faster and innovative ways of working. By using digital technology, you can enable the change you want to make by improving processes and providing better and more relevant data to monitor and evaluate your performance.

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Making Public Sector Productivity Practical

The Productivity Institute
Alliance Manchester Business School
University of Manchester

Bart van Ark

To find out more about the practical steps you can take to boost productivity, **download our full report with The Productivity Institute here**
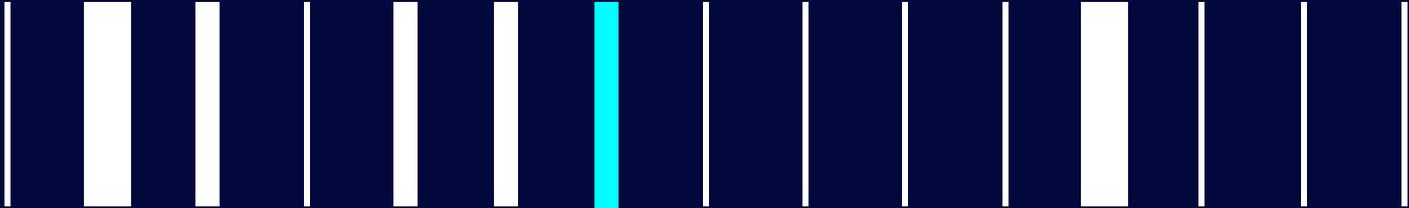
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