



CAPYSAURUS

10 Capacity Conversations Your Team Isn't Having (But Should Be)

Capacity management isn't a dashboard problem. It's a conversation problem.

The hard part isn't tracking utilization or forecasting demand. It's getting five people to agree on what work actually costs, who should be doing what, and when it's time to grow.

These conversations are uncomfortable. They surface disagreements. They challenge assumptions. That's exactly why they matter.

Here are the 10 conversations your team probably isn't having—and why you should start.

1. "What work do we actually do?"

Why it matters:

Most teams can't answer this with specificity. They know their projects. They know their clients. But the repeatable building blocks—the work types that show up again and again—live in everyone's head differently. Without a shared vocabulary, you can't measure, compare, or plan.

When to have it:

When you're first building your capacity system. Then revisit quarterly or when your service offerings change.

What you might discover:

- People use different words for the same thing.

- Work is being duplicated without anyone realizing.
- Some work has been forgotten—assumed to be someone else's responsibility.
- The gap between what you sell and what you actually deliver.

How to start:

"Let's list every type of work that repeats across our clients. Not projects—categories. What are the building blocks?"

2. "How demanding is this work—really?"

Why it matters:

Hours lie. A 30-minute interruption can drain more than a 3-hour focused block. Effort captures what time tracking misses: cognitive load, emotional labor, context switching, client complexity. And it lets you account for experience—the same task takes a larger share of a junior team member's capacity than a senior one's.

When to have it:

After you've built your work catalog. Then revisit when work changes or when scores start feeling off.

What you might discover:

- What management thinks is easy is actually draining.
- What looks lightweight on paper is heavy in practice.
- Experience level shapes perception—and that's valuable data.

How to start:

"On a scale of 1-5, how demanding is this work when it shows up in your week? Not how long—how difficult."

3. "Is your star performer ready for the next level?"

Why it matters:

Your best people want to grow. If they can't see a path forward, they'll find one somewhere else. This conversation makes growth visible and concrete—not just "you're doing great" but "here's where you are, here's the threshold, here's what reaching it looks like."

When to have it:

During 1:1s, quarterly reviews, or whenever someone's capacity profile suggests they're ready for more.

What you might discover:

- Some people are ready and just need the conversation.
- Others need specific growth areas identified.
- Some are already performing above their level and deserve recognition (and compensation).

How to start:

"Let's look at your capacity compared to the next role level. What would it take to close that gap?"

4. "Who has which clients and why?"

Why it matters:

Work distribution often reflects history, not strategy. The person who onboarded a client three years ago still has them—even if it no longer makes sense. This conversation surfaces imbalances before they become burnout.

When to have it:

Monthly or whenever you're onboarding new clients, offboarding team members, or sensing imbalance.

What you might discover:

- Distribution doesn't match role expectations.
- Some people are overloaded with high-touch clients.
- Historical assignments no longer make sense.
- The "why" behind assignments has been forgotten.

How to start:

"Let's map out who has which clients and add up the total effort. Does this distribution make sense for where everyone is today?"

5. "Can we handle more work?"

Why it matters:

Sales wants to close deals. Delivery wants to not drown. Without shared visibility into capacity, these become competing interests instead of collaborative planning. This conversation turns "I think we can handle it" into "here's exactly how much room we have."

When to have it:

Before committing to new work. When pipeline is heating up. During planning cycles.

What you might discover:

- You have more capacity than you thought (hidden room).
- You have less than you thought (someone's already stretched).
- Capacity exists but in the wrong skill areas.

How to start:

"If we won this deal, where would the work go? Do we have the capacity, or would something need to shift?"

6. "When do we need to hire?"

Why it matters:

Hire too early and you burn money on underutilized talent. Hire too late and you lose your best people to burnout. This conversation connects capacity data to hiring forecasts—so you can tell leadership with

confidence, not gut feel.

When to have it:

Quarterly planning. When utilization consistently exceeds targets. When you're modeling growth scenarios.

What you might discover:

- You need to hire sooner than you thought.
- You can delay hiring if you redistribute or improve processes.
- The role you need isn't the one you assumed.

How to start:

"Based on current capacity and projected work, when do we hit the point where we need another person? What role would relieve the most pressure?"

7. "What would make this work easier?"

Why it matters:

High-effort work isn't a fixed fact—it's a problem to solve. Investing in tools, templates, automation, or process improvements can reduce effort scores and effectively expand capacity without adding headcount.

When to have it:

When reviewing effort scores. When the same work keeps showing up as a pain point. During process improvement cycles.

What you might discover:

- A template could cut reporting effort in half.
- A tool integration eliminates manual steps.
- Training would help junior team members handle work more efficiently.
- Some "hard" work is hard because of bad process, not inherent complexity.

How to start:

"This work scores high on effort. What would it take to bring that score down? What's making it harder than it needs to be?"

8. "Is this client worth the effort?"

Why it matters:

Revenue doesn't equal value. A high-paying client who consumes disproportionate effort may be less profitable than a smaller client who's easy to serve. This conversation connects capacity to profitability.

When to have it:

During client reviews. When considering price increases. When deciding which clients to prioritize or sunset.

What you might discover:

- Your "best" client is actually your most expensive to serve.
- Some clients are dramatically more profitable than others.
- Effort-to-revenue ratio varies wildly across the portfolio.

How to start:

"Let's look at the total effort each client requires versus what they pay us. Are there surprises?"

9. "How are you actually doing?"

Why it matters:

Capacity data shows the numbers. This conversation surfaces what the numbers miss—energy, motivation, sustainability. Someone can be "at capacity" on paper and still have room, or be "under capacity" and drowning.

When to have it:

Regularly in 1:1s. Whenever the data and reality seem misaligned. When you sense something's off.

What you might discover:

- The numbers are right but the mix is wrong (too many draining tasks).
- Personal circumstances are affecting capacity temporarily.
- Someone needs support that data can't show.

How to start:

"The numbers say you're at X. Does that match how you're feeling? What's the data missing?"

10. "Does this still feel right?"

Why it matters:

Work catalogs, effort scores, and capacity targets aren't permanent. They're hypotheses that need testing. This conversation keeps the system honest—calibrating against reality instead of calcifying into bureaucracy.

When to have it:

Monthly or quarterly. Whenever the system feels like it's drifting from reality.

What you might discover:

- Effort scores have drifted as processes changed.
- New work types have emerged that aren't captured.
- The system needs adjustment to stay useful.

How to start:

"We set these scores six months ago. Do they still feel accurate? What's changed?"

These conversations are hard. They surface disagreements, challenge assumptions, and take time you don't feel like you have.

But they're worth it.

Because the alternative—guessing at capacity, reacting to burnout, defending hiring decisions with gut feel—costs more in the long run.

Start with one conversation. See what it surfaces. Then have the next one.

And if you want to make these conversations sustainable—to turn what you learn into data you can actually use—that's what Capysaurus is for.

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